

INTERNATIONAL MINDS  
AND THE SEARCH FOR  
THE RESTFUL

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GUSTAV POLLAK

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By  
GUSTAV POLLAK

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## PREFATORY NOTE

THE AUTHOR refers the Reader for a fuller treatment of the subjects discussed in this little book to his previously published volumes on

*International Perspective in Criticism: Goethe, Grillparzer, Sainte-Beuve, Lowell.* New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1914.

*The Hygiene of the Soul: The Memoir of a Physician and Philosopher.* New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1910.

*Franz Grillparzer and the Austrian Drama.* New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1907.

The principal points of what he then said are here once more emphasized, and he hopes that their restatement at the present time will be considered not inopportune.

KEENE VALLEY, N. Y.  
August, 1919.



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## CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. LITERATURE AND PATRIOTISM . .	5
II. GOETHE'S UNIVERSAL INTERESTS .	13
III. GRILLPARZER'S ORIGINALITY . .	34
IV. SAINTE-BEUVE'S UNIQUE POSITION .	49
V. LOWELL: PATRIOT AND COSMOPOLITAN	68
VI. PERMANENT LITERARY STANDARDS .	81
VII. FEUCHTERSLEBEN THE PHILOSOPHER	101
VIII. THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL . .	117
IX. FEUCHTERSLEBEN'S APHORISMS .	162
X. FEUCHTERSLEBEN'S INFLUENCE .	172



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# INTERNATIONAL MINDS AND THE SEARCH FOR THE RESTFUL

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## LITERATURE AND PATRIOTISM

"I AM convinced," says Lessing, "that no nation on earth has a monopoly of intellect in any of its manifestations. I know very well that people talk of the profoundly serious Englishmen and the witty Frenchmen, but who has made this distinction? Surely not Nature, who impartially distributes all her gifts. There are just as many witty Englishmen as witty Frenchmen, and just as many profoundly serious Frenchmen as profoundly serious Englishmen." We have in these words an implied declaration of his belief, borne out by all his teachings, that intellect recognizes no distinctions of nationality, race, or religion.

Chauvinistic criticism of foreign achievement is merely proof of inability to criticize at all. Herder condemns the expression, "the races of mankind," as "ignoble words." And if the

philosopher and scientist is thus admonished to divest himself of a prejudice which would segregate mankind along narrow and arbitrary lines, with how much greater force comes the warning to the literary critic, who is solely concerned with the beautiful in human thought and expression.

Among the eminent writers of present-day England Morley and Bryce have shown international sympathies in every sense of the word. Among our own great writers Oliver Wendell Holmes possessed in full measure active sympathy with other nations. Writing from Paris to his parents, at the age of twenty-five, he said: "One of the greatest pleasures of living abroad is to meet in such an easy, pleasant sort of a way people from all quarters of the world. Greek and Barbarian, Jew and Gentile, differ much less than one thinks." We recognize in the language of the young American student the spirit of the future cosmopolitan thinker.

Unfortunately, the day is not yet past when the interests of nations were considered as necessarily opposed to each other. A hundred years ago Friedrich Schlegel wrote:

The dwellers in Asia and the people of Europe ought to be treated in popular works as members of one vast family, and their history will never be separated by any student anxious fully to comprehend the bearing of the whole; but the idea of Oriental genius in literature generally entertained in the present day is founded on that of a few Asiatic writers only, the Persians and Arabs in particular, and a few books of the Old Testament, in so far as we may be permitted to view the latter as poetry; but there are many other Asiatic nations to whom this ordinary opinion is by no means applicable.

Are East and West nearer to each other to-day? Few indeed are the great writers who have heard the call of the Orient.

I have ventured to group together in these pages five literary men of acknowledged importance—writers whom the literatures of Germany, Austria, France and America cherish among their greatest possessions, who were deeply imbued with the national spirit and yet endowed with international sympathies, who surveyed mankind and its past achievements with a philosophic gaze, who studied and thought as long as they lived, and looked for beauty in literature, finding expression for the perfect things which their search revealed in beautiful words of their own. I have consid-

ered mainly the critical activity of the first four—Goethe, Grillparzer, Sainte-Beuve, and Lowell.

Though there have been greater scholars in special fields who followed the critical calling, no other literary critics brought to their task more varied knowledge and a clearer perception of the dignity of literary achievement. All were careful and keen-eyed observers; each taught and practised that, while in veneration for the literary traditions of the past, and in close study of the great models, are rooted the guiding principles of criticism, the literary man, above all, must live in the present and satisfy the demands of the hour. They had a clear eye for the realities of life and inculcated and practised good citizenship. All four rose to high public station, though Lowell alone was consistently active in the political developments of his country. It was their common lot to be accused of lack of patriotism, but all alike answered and refuted the criticism of their political adversaries. Goethe, occupying the highest positions in the duchy of Saxe-Weimar, Grillparzer as member, in his old age, of the Austrian



House of Peers, Sainte-Beuve as French Senator, Lowell as American Minister in Spain and England—all bore their public dignities easily and worthily.

Each of these men had to contend against physical depressions, which in the case of Grillparzer and Lowell were accentuated by inheritance; but they all conquered their weaknesses by sheer will-power and reliance on intellectual resources. They rose, like all lofty minds, into regions of serenity. Their idealism, as reflected in their critical standards, bears no trace of physical infirmity or mental indecision. Contradictions there are in their critical utterances, but we see in these merely varying aspects of the subjects due to changing moods and the flight of time. Personal prejudice but rarely clouds their literary judgment.

While neither Grillparzer nor Lowell had the encyclopædic range of knowledge over which Goethe's vision swept, nor the familiarity with the natural sciences which the study of medicine had brought to Sainte-Beuve, they seized as eagerly as Goethe and Sainte-Beuve what served their purpose. We find Lowell

early in his career devoting many hours each day to the study of German and Spanish, and he mastered the latter language perhaps even more completely than Grillparzer, though he did not draw the same inspiration from its poets.

Goethe, Grillparzer, Sainte-Beuve, and Lowell alike sought to the last the companionship of wise books, and their critical faculty remained undimmed in old age. Eleven days before his death Goethe writes to his friend Zelter a letter in the liveliest strain; his mind is occupied with "all sorts of examples from ancient history," with an archæological discovery of great personal interest to him, but whose intrinsic importance, he says, one ought to be careful not to overrate: he speaks of remains of fossil animals and plants that are accumulating around him: he finds that it has become the fashion for English, French, and Germans "to express themselves in an incomprehensible manner," and he longs for "the emphatic language of some Italian." And he praises Zelter for remaining "firm in the midst of what is fleeting." "As for myself," he says, "living chiefly in the past, less in the future, and at present

thinking of what is very remote, bear in mind that I am quite content."

Sainte-Beuve, for years in the agonies of a cruel and, as he realized, hopeless malady, kept on writing with stoic determination for the press almost to the last hour. Grillparzer's closing eyes rested on a volume of the Greek tragedian who, above all others, had been his solace in life. Lowell abandoned his reading only with life itself. During his last illness, "his books," in the words of his biographer, Horace E. Scudder, "were close at hand and his constant friends. He re-read Boswell's *Johnson* for the fourth time, and he read the recently published full diary of Walter Scott. He took up novel reading, rather a new taste, and amused himself with contemporaneous society in England as depicted by Norris. . . . Death found him cheerful."

Such was the consistent attitude toward life and literature of these eminently representative men of letters. Theirs was—with all the differences in temperament and personal characteristics—a self-contained repose, as free from flip-pant self-sufficiency as it was from the shallow

optimism which sees in the things of this world the best of all possible things. Though Lowell betrayed the Puritan strain in his blood and professed a certain allegiance to inherited faith, and though Sainte-Beuve sometimes toyed with Catholicism, they ranged themselves with Goethe and Grillparzer on the side of intellectual independence concerning all the religious movements that have left their impress on literature and swayed thinking men. All four, no matter what their subject, spoke from the depth of conviction. We feel at all times the sheer intellectual force of their utterances, and we yield to the charm of their diction. Of each of them, at his best, is true what Emerson said of Montaigne: "Cut his words, and they bleed."

## GOETHE'S UNIVERSAL INTERESTS

SAINTE-BEUVE speaks of Goethe as the greatest of all critics. He certainly stands alone in the comprehensiveness of his intellectual sympathies and the vastness of his knowledge, in the manifestations of a powerful, creative genius finding critical utterance. All the phases of Goethe's activity have been amply discussed in that vast Goethe literature to which all nations have contributed, but something, it would seem, is still to be said of his unique importance as an international critic.

Wisdom such as Goethe possessed is not learned from books; he looked upon life and men, upon literature, science, and art with equal interest and equal detachment. The world can show no other example of so much creative power joined to so much critical acumen. His poetic productions, as he so often pointed out, were born of the impulse of the moment, his critical wisdom was the result of life-long self-restraint. His attitude was always judicial, though at times there was in his judgments a certain lack of finality, as if he felt the need of

still wider information. His intellectual curiosity was endless, though kept within bounds by his natural reposefulness. He allowed nothing to claim his attention exclusively. It was his aim to rise above the merely transitory and fasten upon the permanent. His sympathies were too general to be expended upon any one phase of individual effort. Nor does this imply, as has sometimes been charged, a certain aristocratic aloofness in Goethe's character. "It was natural for me," he says in his autobiography, "to enter into the conditions of other men, to sympathise with every phase of man's existence and to find pleasure in sharing it." We feel this universal sympathy in Goethe's critical attitude toward notable literary efforts of whatever kind. He approaches the most diverse subjects with equal interest and equal desire to learn the truth. He discusses, as a young man, the poems of an obscure Polish Jew quite as philosophically as a scientific treatise on the clouds, or Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*. No other critic has given to the world such ripe and varied results of self-culture. His literary susceptibilities sprang from the ever deepening conviction

that all mankind is related to the truly educated man. He adopted and expanded the saying of Epictetus: "Never, in reply to the question to what country you belong, say that you are an Athenian or a Corinthian, but say that you are a citizen of the world."

In this noble cosmopolitanism lay Goethe's supreme importance as literary critic. The love of one's country is natural to everybody and need not be inculcated, but our interest in other nations can be strengthened and kept alive only by active sympathy and deliberate effort. "The poet," said Goethe to Eckermann, "loves his native land as a man and citizen, but the fatherland of his poetic powers and his poetic activity is the good and noble and beautiful, and that is not limited to any particular province or any particular country.\* He seizes it and makes use of it wherever he finds it. He may be likened to the eagle who soars over the land with wide gaze, and is indifferent as to whether the hare

\*Lowell expresses the same thought in the lines:

"Where is the true man's fatherland?  
Is it where he by chance is born?  
Doth not the yearning spirit scorn  
In such scant borders to be spanned?"

upon which he suddenly descends is running on Prussian or Saxon soil. What, in reality, does it mean to love one's own country and be patriotic? If a poet has all his life endeavored to overcome harmful prejudices and narrow views, to enlighten his countrymen, improve their tastes, and ennoble their feelings and thoughts, could he have been better employed, and have rendered a more patriotic service?"

Amid the endless variety of subjects to which Goethe's critical sagacity was applied throughout life, his vision ever remained clear. He discerned every object that came within his ken, and analyzed carefully whatever appealed to him. No other critic of modern times inspires us with the same confidence in his competence to speak of matters outside of the chosen field in which he is the recognized master; no one had the same background of ripe experience, the same fund of wisdom on which he could endlessly draw. No other critic has so constantly pointed out, by his own example, the interdependence of literature, art and science. Just as, in conversation with his friends, he passed rapidly from topic to topic, culling from the



many fields over which his mind continually ranged, so in his contact with the affairs of life he turned from occupation to occupation, "without haste, without rest." Nothing can be more instructive in this respect than to show how many activities Goethe could crowd into a single year, although, as applied to him, the word "crowded" seems ill-chosen, to such a degree was constant and varied activity a necessity of his nature. Let us take, at random, his notes for the year 1817, in the *Annalen*.

"For more than one reason," he writes, "I had during this year to make a prolonged stay in Jena, and foreseeing this, I sent there some of my manuscripts, drawings, apparatus and collections. But first of all, I inspected the various institutions, and finding much that seemed important in its bearing on the formation and transformation of plants, I established a separate botanical museum."

He also rearranged, during this year, the university library, which was in a state of neglect and confusion, as well as the veterinary school. Among the other subjects to which he devoted attention at the same period were the following:

The anatomy of caterpillars and butterflies, the influence of Kant on his own philosophical studies, geology, mineralogy and kindred sciences, the precious stones of Brazil, the polarization of light and chromatics. Everything assumed additional importance in his hands through his tendency to connect the remote with the present. Thus he says, in the entry referred to:

“I owed much enlightenment in geology and geography to Sorriot’s map of the mountains of Europe; through it, for example, the land and the soil of Spain, so troublesome to a commanding general and so favorable to guerilla warfare, became at once clear to me. I drew the principal water-sheds on my own map of Spain, and every campaign, every route, all the regular and irregular army movements became plain and intelligible.” Plastic art, as usual, claimed much of his attention. His desire to see the Elgin marbles at that time was so great that “one fine, sunny morning, starting to drive from my house without any particular purpose, I suddenly turned, overcome by my desire, towards Rudolstadt, where I refreshed myself by gazing

long on the truly wonderful heads of Monte Cavallo." He studied minutely Bossi's work on Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper" as well as pen drawings, engravings and lithographs, statuary and archæological remains, observed the scattering of the seed of the barberry flower, "casually made it my business to purge an old edition of Thomas Campanella's *De sensu rerum* from printer's errors"; turned with pleasure "after dwelling long on clouds and their forms" to a translation of the Hindu *Megha-Duta*, grew "into the habit of reading Byron," found in John Hunter's *Life* "a most important monument of a splendid mind which, without school learning, developed nobly and powerfully," and contrasted with it the *Life of Franklin*, which, "while of the same general character," was "as wide apart from it as the heavens." From Elphinstone's *Cabul* and Raffle's *History of Java* he "profited immensely." Among other books that influenced him during the year were Hermann's *De Mythologia Graecorum antiquissima* and Raynouard's *Recherches sur l'ancienneté de la langue romane*.

Such many-sidedness implied necessarily the

ability to keep at a distance subjects that had ceased to interest him. Thus he rarely recurred to Rousseau after he reached maturity, although he had been greatly influenced by him in his youth. But what had entered deeply into his intellectual life became his permanent possession. He never ceased to draw inspiration from the ancients, never abated his admiration for Shakespeare, or Molière, or Spinoza.

Much has been said of Goethe's interest in world-literature. In its essence, his effort to foster an international appreciation of the master works of all time was a protest against national one-sidedness. But such an appreciation was conditioned on critical capacity to distinguish between the commonplace good and the commanding best. There is narrowness in too wide a tolerance of mediocrity. Such narrowness was impossible to Goethe. "In our estimate of foreign writers," he says, "we must not fasten upon national characteristics and imagine that they are to serve as our model. We must not single out the Chinese, or the Serbs, or Calderon, or the Nibelungenlied; but if we look for a model of what is really excellent we must

return again and again to the ancient Greeks, in whose works man in all his beauty appears to us. All the rest is only of a historic interest, and we may use what good there is in it as far as it serves our purpose." Goethe disliked provincialism in literature, just as he deprecated sectarianism in religion and chauvinism in politics. International hatred was utterly inconceivable to him. There were certain patriots who reproached him with not having taken up arms during the War of Liberation, or at least with not having encouraged it openly in his writings.

"Let us not speak of this," said Goethe on this subject to Eckermann; "we live in a foolish world, which does not know what it wants; we must allow it to have its say. How could I take up arms without being impelled thereto by hatred? And how could I hate at my age? Had those events happened when I was twenty years of age, I should surely not have been the last to take up arms, but they took place when I was past sixty. Besides, we cannot all serve our country in the same way. Each of us must do the best God has enabled him to do. I have

toiled hard enough for half a century. I may say that in those matters which nature has fitted me to do as my daily task, I have allowed myself no rest or relaxation by day or night; I have always toiled, studied, and aimed at progress as far and as well as I could. If each of us can say the same thing of himself, it will be well with all of us. . . .

“To write military songs, sitting in my room—that would indeed have suited my nature! Camping in the open air, by night, with the horses of the enemy’s outposts neighing near me, that would have been more to my liking. But this was not my affair, nor the object of my life. That was the business of Theodor Körner; his martial songs suited his nature perfectly. But war is foreign to me, and I am without military ambition; martial songs would therefore have been merely a mask, which would have ill fitted me.

“I have never affected anything in my poetry. I have never thought and expressed anything that did not live within me and inspire me irresistibly. I have never written love songs except when I loved; how then could I have written

songs of hatred without hating? And between ourselves, I never hated the French, although I thanked God when we were rid of them. How could I, to whom the question of culture and barbarism alone is all-important, hate a nation which is among the most cultured of the world, and to which I owe so great a part of my own culture? National hatred is indeed a peculiar thing. It is always found most pronounced and violent where civilization is lowest; but there is a stage of culture where it vanishes altogether, where one stands, so to say, above all nations, and feels the happiness and the sorrows of a neighboring people as much as if they were a part of one's own. This degree of culture was in accord with my nature, and I had become confirmed in these views before I reached my sixtieth year."

The creation of a world-literature was, in Goethe's eyes, the natural result of an intelligent and humane interest in other nations than one's own. "It is very gratifying," he said, "that the close relations existing between French, English and Germans make it possible for these nations to correct each other. We,

perhaps, can appreciate Shakespeare and Byron better than the English."

Numerous passages scattered throughout Goethe's writings testify to his appreciation of the peculiar importance of English literature. He often laid stress on the value of becoming familiar with the English language and thus with the character of the British nation. He wrote to Countess O'Donnell, July 24, 1813: "I congratulate you sincerely on your interest in the English language. Its literature offers the vastest treasures, and it is scarcely possible to appreciate all its wealth on first approaching it."

In one of his minor scientific papers, entitled *Materials for a History of the Color Theory*, he remarks, with reference to Newton's personality: "What chiefly characterizes the English, and cannot be too highly praised, is that they make it possible for so many sound and straightforward individuals to develop themselves, each in his own way, while at the same time serving the public and the commonwealth. This is an advantage which perhaps no other nation possesses, at least not to the same extent." Elsewhere, in these notes on scientific subjects, he



says: "The English possess, perhaps above most nations, the ability to impress themselves upon foreigners. Their personal repose, precision, industry, firmness of opinion and complacency, form an almost unapproachable model of what everybody would wish to attain."

Goethe's critical activity, strictly speaking, extended over sixty years. He began to write for the *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen* in 1772, when twenty-three years of age, and his earliest contributions showed that seriousness and maturity which characterized all his critical work. He wrote on Sulzer's Theory of the Fine Arts, on Homer and Shakespeare, on the Truths of Revelation, on Paradise and Eternity, on Lavater's Sermons, on a work about Turkish Laws, on a treatise concerning the Characteristics of the Principal European Nations, on a scientific System of Nature, etc. Of greater importance were his subsequent contributions, on a vast range of literary, scientific, linguistic, and æsthetic subjects, which appeared in Wieland's *Merkur*, in the *Propyläen*, in *Kunst und Alterthum*, and the *Jenaische Allgemeine Literaturzeitung*. Painting, sculpture, architecture, and

the drama at all times claimed his critical attention. In a larger sense his entire life was devoted to the exposition of his views on these subjects, and his critical activity was only varied, but not interrupted, by his creative work. His *Autobiography* (*Dichtung und Wahrheit*) and *Wilhelm Meister* contain literary and philosophical criticism of the highest value, and we must go not only to *Faust*, but also to the *Elective Affinities*, and even to *Tasso* and *Iphigenia*, if we would have full insight into Goethe's philosophical and critical methods. His *Annalen*, and his correspondence with Schiller, with the Humboldts, with Zelter, and with other friends, are inexhaustible critical repositories, but even these are surpassed in value by his talks with Eckermann. In Eckermann's *Conversations with Goethe* the great thinker stands before us in all the benignant wisdom of his last decade. Nowhere else does he so fully impress us with the comprehensiveness of his knowledge and judgment.

It is characteristic of Goethe's attitude toward life and literature that even in his earliest book notices philosophical reflection pre-

dominates over critical analysis. He was never a professional critic in the usual sense of the word. Books of doubtful value he scarcely ever read or alluded to, either in writing or in conversation; but he recurred again and again to the excellent, expatiating upon previously uttered thoughts that seemed to him to require amplification, and comparing the great writers and artists of one nation with those of another. The French are contrasted with the ancients, Béranger suggests Horace or Hafiz; from Voltaire and priestcraft we pass to the fossiliferous formation of some German mountain. Everywhere we see the hand of wisdom pointing to some new outlook upon the world.

Of great intrinsic importance are Goethe's reflections called forth by the activity of the French periodical, *Le Globe*, to which, in the last years of his life, before it became an organ of Saint-Simonism, he paid much attention. The writers in the *Globe*, among whom was Sainte-Beuve, appeared to him to have grasped clearly the meaning of his world-literature, and the admiration bestowed by able commentators in that periodical on his own dramatic works

filled him with genuine pleasure. In addition to the *Globe* he read with interest several of the most important British reviews, whose contributions likewise testified to the spread of international relations in literature. He anticipated, however, the objections to an indiscriminate and artificial identification of literary interests among the nations of the world, and laid the greatest stress on the need of serious individual effort and the cultivation of one's native talent.

"Vast as the world is," he wrote, "it is but an enlarged fatherland, and, if we look at the matter closely, it cannot give us more than our native soil can furnish. What pleases the multitude is sure to gain unbounded popularity and, as we see, spreads to the furthest countries and to every clime; but what is serious and important is less certain of such a result. Nevertheless, those who devote themselves to higher ideals and to what is productive in the best sense will henceforth come into more rapid and closer contact. There are in every part of the world men interested in what has been long established and must serve as a base for the true progress of humanity. But their ways are not the ways

of the average man, nor can their pace be followed; those who live for the enjoyment of life demand a more rapid rate of progress, and hence refuse to be led and to aid in the cause which they ought to serve. The serious-minded, therefore, must form a quiet and self-contained community; it were useless to oppose the broad current of the hour, but it is well to maintain courageously one's firm attitude until the flood has passed. The principal consolation and encouragement that such men will find is that what is true is also useful. . . . Every nation has peculiarities which distinguish it from other nations, and it is these characteristics which mutually attract and repel. An inner peculiarity is in its outward manifestation often very obnoxious to another nation, or if not so, appears at least ridiculous. For these reasons we always appreciate every nation less fully than it deserves. The inner traits are neither known nor recognized, not only by strangers, but by the very nation itself. The real nature, with nations as with individuals, is beneath the surface, and we are astonished at its sudden manifestation."

Goethe often spoke in a similar strain about the importance of looking at life and literature from a wider point of view than the purely national one; thus he said, in a review of Serb folk-songs: "The purely human repeats itself among all nations, but it inspires no real interest when it appears in a foreign garb or under a foreign sky; what is particularly characteristic of every nation produces only a strange and often a disagreeable impression, like everything peculiar the proper significance of which we have not grasped, and which we have therefore not yet learned to understand."

Goethe often held up the directness of the English style as a model to his countrymen. He said to Eckermann:

"On the whole, philosophical speculations are injurious to the Germans, as they infuse into their literary style something vague, intangible and obscure. The stronger their adherence to certain philosophic schools, the worse they write. Those Germans, however, who, as business-men and men of the world, look only to the practical side of things, write best. Schiller's style is most brilliant and impressive when he

ceases to philosophize, as I see in his letters, which I am just now looking over, and which are of the highest importance. There are also gifted German women who write admirably, and, indeed, they are in this respect superior to some of our famous male authors.

"The English, as a rule, write uniformly well, being born orators and men of practical sense, busy with realities. The French, in their style, are true to their general character. Their nature is social, and they never forget what is due to the public whom they address. They endeavor to be clear, so as to convince the reader, and agreeable, so as to please him.

"All in all, the style of an author is the true image of his mind. He who would write clearly, ought first to think clearly, and whoever would have a grand style must first have a grand character."

Genius, in Goethe's conception of the term, implied character. He thus expresses himself to Eckermann as to the harm done by writers who lacked, in their very nature, the elements of real greatness: "Want of character, in individual investigators and writers is the source

of all the evils in our recent literature. In criticism especially, this defect produces great harm." He sighed for another Lessing, for one of his character and firmness. The greatest ability, if not employed in the pursuit of high aims, merely repelled him. Two months before his death, in speaking to Eckermann about Victor Hugo's great productivity, he remarked: "Can a writer help deteriorating and ruining even a very great talent, if he has the hardihood to write in a single year two tragedies and a novel, and if, moreover, he seems to write only in order to amass a great deal of money? I by no means blame him for trying to become rich, nor for seeking the fame of the day, but if he wishes to be remembered by posterity he must begin to write less and to work more."

In his teachings as in his practice, Goethe enforced the need of keeping at a distance the vulgar which threatens to enthrall us all. "Men are so prone," says Wilhelm Meister, "to give themselves up to the commonplace and vulgar, the mind and the feelings so easily become callous to the beautiful and the perfect, that one ought to try in every way possible to retain a



taste for higher things. Such enjoyments no one can wholly do without. Our lack of familiarity with what is really excellent is the explanation why so many take pleasure in what is silly and insipid, merely because it is new. We ought to form the habit of listening every day to some pretty song, reading a fine poem, looking at a beautiful picture and, if possible, saying a few sensible things."

## GRILLPARZER'S ORIGINALITY

GRILLPARZER'S critical writings are virtually unknown to English readers. Even in Germany his fame as a dramatist has completely overshadowed every other phase of his intellectual activity. George Saintsbury and Edward Dowden were the first English literary authorities who grasped the significance of Grillparzer's critical utterances. Saintsbury remarks, in his *History of Criticism*: "I am told by persons who know more about the matter than I do, that Grillparzer was a remarkable playwright; I am sure that he is a remarkable critic."

Grillparzer was all his life a lover of good books of many nations. He studied Greek and Spanish dramatic literature, in particular, more constantly than did Goethe, Sainte-Beuve, or Lowell. For the portrayal of his characters and the development of his plots, he went to no source but his imagination: for his literary background he turned to volume after volume of recondite lore. And with all his ease in composition—after the slow brooding time was over—only the constant exercise of severe self-criti-

cism gave him that unerring felicity of phrase, that intimate adaptation of word to mood and action which marks the great literary artist.

As I have said elsewhere\*: "Jotted down mostly on the spur of the moment, with no thought of publication, and covering, as they do, practically the entire period of his intellectual activity, his critical remarks are all the more interesting from their momentary point of view and not infrequent contradictions—the result of riper judgment and an invariable desire to be just. His lifelong study of the Greek dramatists is evidenced by a weighty paper on the significance of the chorus in the ancient tragedy, and particularly by numerous passages on Euripides, his favorite author among the ancients. An entire volume of the Cotta edition of Grillparzer's works is given up to his contributions to the study of the Spanish theatre, covering hundreds of plays. Of the masterpieces of the Spanish dramatists Grillparzer might often have said, in his moments of despondency, what Lowell wrote after the death of his second wife: 'I have at last found some-

\**Franz Grillparzer and the Austrian Drama.*

thing I can read—Calderon.’ Grillparzer studied Calderon, and even more Lope de Vega, with loving minuteness. To no other writer did he turn more frequently for inspiration than to the latter.”

While it may be said that Grillparzer was a critic primarily for his own creative purposes, his subjective attitude merely heightens the clearness and precision of his utterances, which serve all the purposes of the most exacting objective criticism. Neither Goethe, nor Sainte-Beuve, nor Lowell, possessed the gift of self-criticism to the same degree as Grillparzer. It may be doubted whether the verbal blemishes—his Austriacisms and apparent occasional lapses in grammatical construction—are not the result of direct intention, rather than of accidental carelessness; what is certain is that the consistency and individuality of his characters bear the imprint of that critical habit which he turned against himself as remorselessly as he did against others. It is a curious and most instructive fact that every one of Grillparzer’s great dramas has been pronounced his masterpiece by some competent critic—a singular phenomenon

in literary criticism which, if it does not demonstrate the caprice of critics, proves that every one of these plays possesses merits of the very highest order. It may be doubted whether as much can be said of the total output of any other great dramatist of modern times. Grillparzer analyzed his own works sometimes morbidly, but, as a rule, dispassionately and in a spirit of philosophical and modest resignation. What he says, in his fragmentary autobiography, concerning the right of the general public to pronounce judgment on the dramatic worth of a play is as sane criticism as has ever been uttered on the subject. Referring to his *Medea* trilogy, he remarked:

"I have always attached great value to the judgment of the public. As regards the conception of his play the dramatic poet must consult his own judgment, but as to whether in its execution he has depicted human nature as we find it in life, the public alone, as representing human nature, can tell him. The public is no judge, but a jury; it issues its verdict in the shape of approval or disapproval. Its right to judge is based not on knowledge of the law, but on spon-

taneous and natural feeling. Of this naturalness, which in northern Germany has been pushed into the background by pseudo-culture and blind imitation, there still exists in Austria a considerable remnant, combined with a susceptibility which, by proper guidance on the part of the poet, can be heightened to an incredible degree. The pleasure of such a public may not prove much, for it wishes, above all, to be amused, but its disapproval is in the highest degree instructive. In this case all it pronounced was a *succes d'estime*."

His autobiography closed with this reference to his superb drama, *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*:

"I had found a new dramatic subject, or rather an old one, which I took up again: *Hero and Leander*. A beautiful woman tempted me to represent her outward form, even if not her real being, as she passes through the vicissitudes of fortune. The somewhat affected title, *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* (The Waves of the Sea and of Love), was to point at the outset to the romantic, or rather purely human, treatment of the ancient legend. My interest

centered in the principal character, and therefore I crowded the other persons—nay, toward the end, the development of the story itself—further into the background than was really just. And yet it was these last acts that I wrote with the deepest sentiment, the outcome of my interest in the heroine. That the fourth act bored the spectators to some extent lay partly in my intention, . . . but there are also other things in the play that ought to have been different.” Two weeks after the first performance of *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* he penned the following criticism of the play:

“On the fifth of this month (April, 1831) *Hero und Leander* was performed. No success. The first three acts were vociferously applauded, but the last two were passed over in inattentive silence. It is sad indeed that the voice of the public coincides so fully with my own doubts. The fifth act is unfortunately only too effective, too theatrical (for which reason I always wanted to change it); it evidently suffered from the ineffectiveness of the fourth act, for it is impossible to produce an effect upon a public that has lost its interest. Curious indeed!

I wrote just this fourth act with the deepest feeling; nowhere did I enter so closely into the situation, and I originally considered it particularly good; but when I rewrote the play, a year later, I could not any more find the key to it. There is evidently too little development in the whole of the play; it is fragmentary and the result rather of general enthusiasm than of particular interest in the subject itself—in other words, it is more of a sketch than of a picture. I had set myself a tremendous task. Had I succeeded, the result would have been a great gain for poetry. But I did not succeed, and yet, and yet! If I can succeed in keeping myself, by a few successful plays, within the ranks of the poets who are to last, there may come a time when the world will recognize the value of this fourth act, even though I only half attained what I aimed at."

While conceding to the public the rôle of a jury, as far as the theatrical effectiveness of a play is concerned, he was, as we have seen, far from granting it the rights of a judge in purely literary matters. Moreover, much as he appreciated in theory, and illustrated in practice,



spontaneity of sentiment and naturalness of expression ("Die Natürlichkeit der Empfindung") he did not believe in "natural poets," and distrusted the ability of the people, as such, to product a literary work of genius. He deprecated the glorification of folk-lore by literary historians and sought in every genuine poetic work, whether epic or lyric, for the individual author. The anonymous multitude never created anything great, he said, and added:

"Since Hegel threw doubt on the validity of individual talent and every wooden pedant found it convenient to deny the prerogative of intellectual endowment, the theory of poetry without poets was established. Epics were supposed to have been the outcome of simple folk-songs, which some one from the rabble had made and some Middle-High German pedant had put together at haphazard. In this way the entire nation was elevated to the rank of poets, and according to this theory of folk-poesy, there is no reason why every writer of poetic doggerel of our own day should not consider himself as laying the foundations for future Iliads and Odysseys."

Grillparzer recognized in the Nibelungenlied a mysterious work of great power and wonderful poetic charm, but to believe, he said, "that such a poem could have come out of the mouth of the common people is to assume the impossible."

Contrary to Goethe, who admired artistic perfection in literature regardless of the genre, and ranked Béranger as highly as he did Byron or Molière, Grillparzer assumed a certain gradation of values in literary form and expression. To epigrams and satires he assigned the lowest rank, to the drama the highest. The distinction is significant. Grillparzer disclaimed for himself a place by the side of the greatest dramatic poets, and he set little store by the multitude of epigrammatic flings (admirable satires of their kind) in which, throughout his life, he attacked bureaucratic stupidity or retaliated against political and literary persecution. Like his critical utterances, these epigrams slumbered in the recesses of his writing-desk.

Like Goethe, Grillparzer could appreciate the critical standards of many nations, as embodied in works of great literary excellence,

and puritanism in literary matters was as foreign to him as to Goethe. But he had a sovereign contempt, exemplified in his own literary practices, for offences against established æsthetic standards. He wrote of Swift:

“Have the publishers of Swift’s works done well in including therein those obscene riddles the composing of which gave the Dean of St. Patrick, then nearly sixty years of age, so much pleasure? I believe they have. For in spite of the inexpressible pain these riddles have given me, they embody a great lesson. That is to say, they show to what even the highest intellectual gifts finally lead if unaccompanied by genuine warmth of heart. But my disappointment was none the less real, for I was on the point of learning to admire Swift, in spite of all his faults.”

Much as he loved the ancients, Grillparzer was far from being their imitator. Like Goethe, he believed that the poet must in his works reflect his inner life. When reproached with having made his Sappho express un-Greek sentiments, he merely remarked that he had written his play for Germans and not for Athenians. He made the difference between the life of the

Athenians and our own clear in another critical utterance. Even in his Greek plays he had chiefly his Austrian audience in mind.

One quality, above all others, Grillparzer demanded of every poet, no matter how great and individual his gifts—concentration of all his powers. Just as Goethe admonished the poets to “command poesy,” so Grillparzer showed by his own example that only he can be successful in literature who is master of himself and of his surroundings as well as of his moods. He had no patience with those critical theories which see in the works of a genius the results of his time and the conditions of his milieu. “The progress of art,” he said, “depends upon talent and not upon historical events. Goethe would have been the same great poet if there never had been a Frederick the Great, and the French Revolution, which surely was powerful enough in its workings, has not produced a single poet.”

Professor Auguste Ehrhard, the author of an admirable French work on Grillparzer, crowned by the French Academy, remarks that in a period of great literary unrest in Germany Grillparzer’s æsthetic convictions never wavered.

"He was guided," says Ehrhard, "by the artistic sense inherent in the Austrians, as well as by his own poetic instinct." His æsthetic education was of the broadest, and comprised a knowledge of music such as Sainte-Beuve and Lowell lacked, and Goethe never fully acquired. Goethe, indeed, was in his youth a performer of some skill on several musical instruments and sought in his old age, through his association with Zelter, to acquaint himself with certain musical theories, and Lowell recognized (in his essay on Pope) the value of music to a poet. "Milton, Collins and Gray," he remarks, "our three great masters of harmony, were all musicians." With Grillparzer, music was part of his very nature, and his familiarity with this art entered into all his æsthetic theories.

The following extract will, to some extent, give an idea of the comprehensiveness and originality of a writer whom his French biographer considers the greatest critic that Germany has produced since the days of Lessing. As a characteristic specimen of Grillparzer's breadth of view it will suffice to point to his appreciation of Ghiberti, penned after reading a

German translation of his *Chronicle of Florence*:

"I must confess that few books have made so deep an impression upon me. While Benvenuto Cellini's *Life* shows us the heaven-storming Titan, who, intent upon his work in his inexhaustible power, regards all those beside and around him as so many disturbing and antagonizing opponents, Ghiberti's gentle, perhaps somewhat feminine, nature clings with a glorifying love to his contemporaries, and affords us a picture of days which had no equal in any other epoch in art. The Michael-Angelo-like Brunelleschi, the joyous Donatello, Masaccio, Filippo Lippi—monk and painter—the wonderful Leonardo da Vinci, in his early beginnings, and the peaceful painter of Fiesole—briefly mentioned yet throwing over us, as it were, a shimmer of his angelic halo—added to all these a world of artists of the second and third rank, whom we see not only in sharply defined outline, but in all their relations of life, and in situations such as to-day are found only in novels, but which those days produced in abundance—what an age! There are entire

countries whose history from the creation of the world to the year of our Lord 1833 offers not half as much of real interest as little Florence under the Medici. Truly, he who espies at a distance an Italian in the street ought to uncover his head, and say to himself: 'Here is one of those who are the fathers of modern civilization.' I do not doubt that many will ridicule such an idea. Let those not read Ghiberti's book; all others will enjoy it."

Grillparzer, like Goethe, capable of the highest imaginative flights, guarded with equal jealousy his critical independence. With all his admiration for Euripides, Lope, Shakespeare, and Goethe himself, he was, as it were, constantly on the guard against their overmastering power. When starting on a journey on one occasion, he asked himself: "What books am I to take with me for my poetic flight? Little, and yet much! Herodotus and Plutarch, besides the two Spanish dramatists. And not Shakespeare? No, not Shakespeare, although he is perhaps the greatest product of the modern age. Not Shakespeare! He tyrannizes over my intellect, and I want to remain free. I thank God

that he exists, and that I have the good fortune to read him and re-read him, and absorb him. But now I shall try to forget him. The ancients invigorate me, the Spaniards incite me to productiveness; but the former are too remote, the latter too purely human—with their blemishes amid their greatest beauties, and their often exaggerated mannerisms—to influence deeply my nature, my individual way of looking at things. But the giant Shakespeare usurps the powers of Nature, whose most magnificent mouth-piece he was, and whosoever surrenders himself to him will forever have to go to him for an answer to any question which he may wish to ask Nature herself.”



## SAINTE-BEUVE'S UNIQUE POSITION

WITHIN the whole range of literature no country has produced a critic like Sainte-Beuve. He is unique in vastness of achievement, in the erudition and industry he brought to his task, as well as in the unfailing grace, apparently so spontaneous and yet the result of unremitting effort, which illumines his pages. French literature in its entirety lay open before him; he was at home with philosophers and journalists, with historians and scientists, with society and life in all their shades and, often enough, their shadows; with great and little men and women, with all prominent figures in the annals of French history; he analyzed character as profoundly as he did books; and while he gave to France all the resources of an eminently French intellect, he spoke of her literature as one whose background was all literature, and who had assimilated the culture of the other great civilized nations.

Criticism was with Sainte-Beuve, as he himself said, "an instinct and a passion," but he laid down no critical canons, as other critics have

done. Boileau and men of lesser eminence have attempted to teach what may be called the science of the profession, and Lessing has written an immortal text-book on one aspect of the subject; Sainte-Beuve embodied his critical views in countless articles, from which those who would learn his secret may deduce his theory as best they can. Yet he was lavish enough of direct advice, which no one who aspires to literary taste, let alone to literary judgment, can afford to ignore. We may open his pages anywhere, and we shall learn and admire. In one of his Monday *Causeries*, that on "Public Evening Readings," we seem to be initiated into a course of lectures not only on French literature and æsthetics, but on the proper study of literature in general, and on the art of reading wisely books of whatever kind. He speaks as the lover of French literature, who would open its treasures to his countrymen, and as the man of international culture who admires all that is of universal appeal. "I should wish," he warningly says, "the lecturer dwelling on the beauties and the grandeur of our literature and national history to guard against repeating what is so con-

stantly said, in colleges and even in Academies on solemn occasions: that the French are the greatest and most sensible of all nations, and our literature the greatest of all literatures. I should wish him to content himself with saying that it is one of the finest, and that the world did not begin and does not end with us."

Much as has been written about Sainte-Beuve, his cosmopolitan aspect has not yet been sufficiently emphasized, although an attentive reading of his critical articles, whatever the subject, cannot fail to disclose his international sympathies. What he admires, for instance, above all in Montaigne is that he, "like Socrates, did not consider himself citizen of a single town, but of the whole world, that his imagination grasped, in its wide sweep, the universal character of all ages and all countries." If he ranks Montaigne with the wisest of Frenchmen, it is precisely because he finds in him a wisdom that is not distinctively French. "Such as he is," says Sainte-Beuve, "Montaigne is our Horace; he is like him in his very nature and often in form and expression, although in point of style he also resembles Seneca. His book is a treas-

ure-house of moral observations and experiences; open his pages where we may, and we shall be sure to find, no matter what his momentary mood, some wise thought expressed in a telling and impressive manner, something standing out in its beautiful and deep meaning, graven permanently into one striking word, or a single, strong, intimate, or grand line." The comparison with Horace is carried further: we lose sight of Montaigne the Frenchman, and have before us once more the polished wit of antiquity, who bids us dismiss our private anxieties and public concerns, and refrain from borrowing trouble. Sainte-Beuve gives us a true measure of his critical capacity in such allusions.

Again and again this note of insistence on comparisons with other writers than those of one's own language is struck in Sainte-Beuve's writings. He would have the French profit by such critics as the Swiss De Muralt, who, in his *Lettres sur les Anglais et les Français*, tells Sainte-Beuve's countrymen certain wholesome truths. Apropos of De Muralt's criticism of Boileau's *Satires*, Sainte-Beuve remarks that such judgments are of particular value to those

“who look at French literature at some distance, and take their standard of comparison from the great poets of all times and of all countries, and from human nature itself.” With what convincing earnestness does Sainte-Beuve plead the cause of minor writers, like Gresset and Parny, who have been stripped by narrow critics of their peculiar charm and thus robbed of the appreciation due them. How ought one to approach writers like these? he asks. Are the learned but one-sided commentators to have it all their own dull way? What ought to be the proper equipment of the critic? “Is it necessary to adopt the method of Gervinus in order to understand and admire La Fontaine? In order to give to Gresset his proper place, to assign to an elegy of Parny the rank it deserves, is it indispensable for us to have gone the rounds of all literature, to have read the *Nibelungen* and to know by heart the mystic stanzas of Calderon?” Possibly, he says. “In any case, this is the longest route, and when we return home into our own quarters we run the risk of being so fatigued that we fall asleep. Nevertheless, I admit that if a small amount of knowl-

edge takes us away from the love of beauty and simple charms, much knowledge brings us back to it."

Sainte-Beuve looked upon spontaneous love of nature, truth, and beauty, as lying at the very foundation of the great works of literature, as of the great deeds of men. Against these sentiments the efforts of reformers beat in vain. If literature and all human institutions are to endure, it is because of their response to a universal need. The appeals of reformers to the intellect alone fail in literature, as they do in life. There is a significant passage on this subject in Sainte-Beuve's article on Sieyès. "His mistake, like the mistakes of all who seek solitude, lay in believing that a radical reform in human nature is possible, and that man, even if we take the chosen few, can be made once for all to obey reason."

Sainte-Beuve had as little of the zealous reformer and innovator in him as Goethe. They were alike in their distrust of apostles of any new creed, in their endeavor to preserve rather than to demolish and build anew. Sainte-Beuve's entire activity as a critic breathes repose

and moderation, and the past was ever present with him. Genius without repose was to him incomplete and incapable of perfection. He said of La Harpe that he was wanting in some of the qualities essential in the formation of character, that he had neither moderation nor balance, and did not know what it means to stop at the right time or to return wisely to one's moorings; that he had no memory for the past. "The last eleven or twelve years of his life," he remarked, "showed that impossibility of his ever reaching maturity which is the defect of certain emotional natures."

What he liked, above all, in a writer was the ability to pause and seek refuge from the petty concerns of the moment in the permanent things of the past. "Let there be," he said, in an article on Jules Janin, "beyond the region of all the political systems and the borders of warring doctrines a territory more or less neutral—a kind of sylvan retreat where one is welcome to stray for a little while and dream of those things old as the world and yet eternally young, of spring and summer and love and youth; where one may even walk about (if youth be past) with a book

in one's hand, and live with an author of another age, free to enjoy him for the whole day, and, on returning to the city, to ask every passer-by, 'Have you, too, read the book?' Monsieur Janin claims this right, and I claim it with him, although with less reason, for I have long since ceased to dream of youth and spring; but I do want the rambler and dreamer to have the right to read an old book, a book as far removed as possible from the quarrels of the day, and become completely absorbed in it."

This art of dreaming, book in hand, Sainte-Beuve understood better than any critic before or after him. He finds himself in the company of another dreamer, Fontenelle, in his fanciful *Entretiens sur la Pluralité des Mondes* (talks on astronomy with a beautiful marquise in a beautiful park) and whither does Sainte-Beuve's fancy, spurred on by his vast knowledge, not lead him! While admitting the insinuating charm of these poetico-scientific discourses, he refuses to surrender to a method which "wheedles one into truth." How differently, he muses, does Pascal view Heaven and Nature! "Pascal felt in awe and trembling the majesty and immensity



of Nature, while Fontenelle seems merely able to detect her cleverness. He never possessed that ideal, celestial geometry which a Pascal, a Dante, a Milton, or even a Buffon conceived of as established from the very beginning; he has it not and has no idea that he lacks it; he belittles the heavens in trying to explain them."

Sainte-Beuve was well read in the natural sciences; his study of medicine and anatomy in particular stood him in good stead, yet even in discussing men of science he was chiefly interested in the literary and personal aspects of his subject. He inquired into the range and depth of the author's mind, into his relations with the thinkers of other countries; he analyzed his language, and asked whether his genius was imaginative and went hand in hand with grace and culture. Buffon, for this reason, interested him deeply; he found in him that sacred celestial flame which the great naturalist ignored in his dictum that genius is nothing but a matter of industry and patience. "The genius of Buffon," Sainte-Beuve said, "partakes equally of the poet and the philosopher; the two characters fuse and unite in him as was the case in primitive times."

It has been said that Buffon oscillated between Newton and Descartes; Sainte-Beuve maintains that Buffon has an equal share, rather, in Newton and Milton, and that precisely where he is most systematic he is most poetic.

Sainte-Beuve let it be clearly understood that he wished to be ranged among the critics who, without promulgating a system of their own, prove by the manner in which they pronounce judgment their right to speak with authority. "The characteristic of critics in general," he said (in his article on Villemain and Cousin), "is, as the name indicates, to judge, and, wherever necessary, to render a clear-cut decision. Take all the important men to whom the title of critic has been applied, Malherbe, Boileau (for both were critics in the form of poets); Dr. Johnson in England, our own La Harpe, even De Fontanes—all these men, who were authoritative in their day, judged in matters of taste with vivacity, perhaps with too much dogmatism, but at all events clearly and with irresistible definiteness."

Constituted as he was, Sainte-Beuve demanded of the great writers, even in details, accurate

knowledge. Vagueness was in his eyes an evidence, if not a confession, of weakness. He takes Balzac severely to task for his psychological vagaries, for his leanings towards the Swedenborgs, Mesmers, Saint-Germains and Cagliostros, and he makes effective use of his own physiological knowledge by twitting Balzac with having discovered, in his studies of the human anatomy, imaginary veins and lymphatic vessels.

Sainte-Beuve was not wholly just to Balzac, though he recognized in him "perhaps the most original and penetrating painter of the morals of his time." The immensity of his canvases, the audaciousness of his attempts, offended his delicate sense of proportion, and he felt uneasy in the morbid atmosphere of Balzac's characters. Sir Walter Scott, too, as Sainte-Beuve recognized, painted on a large scale, but he fills us with delight, while Balzac, though he had come under his spell, could only envy, but never emulate, the charm of the Scotch wizard. "Had not Scott," asked Sainte-Beuve, "breathed that universal charm, that purity and healthfulness, that wholesome air which circulates even amid

the conflict of human passions?" One feels the need of going to him for refreshment, says Sainte-Beuve, of plunging into some sane and clear book after finishing the *Parents Pauvres*, or of immersing one's self in a song of Milton, "in lucid streams," in those pure currents of which the poet sings.

Sainte-Beuve speaks of English writers, not as a Frenchman, but as Goethe speaks of Scott and Goldsmith—with cosmopolitan understanding. "If you knew English," he writes to a friend who had sent him some verses of his own, "you would have a treasure, upon which you could draw. England has a poetic literature greatly superior to ours—one which, above all, is more healthful, just as it is richer. Wordsworth has not been translated, one cannot translate such things, one goes and drinks them at the source."

There are many allusions to Wordsworth in Sainte-Beuve's pages, and he has himself felicitously translated—"imitated" the French call it, with a just recognition of the limits of translation—several of Wordsworth's sonnets. Keats also engaged Sainte-Beuve's muse at the time when he still attempted poetic flights. He was,

however, more at home with the English prose writers. He wrote penetrating essays on Gibbon, Lord Chesterfield and Cowper, as he did on Benjamin Franklin. They had in common a grace of style not unlike his own, and in the case of Gibbon the difficulty of defining a genius partly French and yet characteristically British challenged Sainte-Beuve's ingenuity. He was, however, in all his criticisms impelled by a far higher motive than zest in analyzing style and character. He possessed from the very beginning, says Paul Elmer More, "that inquisitive passion for the truth without which all other critical gifts are as brass and tinkling cymbals." With such impassioned love of truth fondness for generalization is incompatible. Sainte-Beuve had an innate distrust of a certain class of historical writers whose mission, almost as a matter of course, inclines them to establish theories in order to explain facts. Memoirs, the living testimony of eye-witnesses, he read with an enthusiasm which the sober pages of the historian seldom evoked. His admiration for Saint-Simon's pictures of the court of Louis XIV was unbounded, but he was sceptical as to

the absolute value of Guizot's *Histoire de la Civilisation en Europe*. "Generalizations," he said, "which appear to us so profound when applied to distant ages, seem superficial enough if we apply them to our own time. Let me make my meaning clear: I admire that power of a broad and ingenious mind which remolds and restores of the past all that can be restored, which gives to it, if not the true meaning, at least a plausible and probable meaning, which puts order into history, and gives direction and useful support to our study of it. But what I object to as dangerous is the tendency to draw conclusions from a past thus remade and reconstructed, from a past artificially simplified—conclusions bearing on a changeable and changing present. As for myself, after reading some of these high-sounding lessons on the History of Civilization, given with so much precision and definiteness, I quickly open a volume of the Memoirs of Retz, in order to see the real play of human intrigue and masquerade."

There is a passage in Sainte-Beuve's article on Joubert (*Causeries du Lundi*, Vol. I) which gives us a glimpse of his method, if method it

can be called, of preserving intact his literary detachment while nourishing his taste at the varied sources of admirable writing.

"I have sometimes asked myself," he says, "what a handbook of French rhetoric ought to be, a book sensible, fair, and natural, and it has even happened to me, once in my life, that I had to talk on the subject before young people. What was I to do to avoid falling into beaten tracks and being caught by the fancies of the day? I began simply with Pascal, with his thoughts on literature, in which the great writer laid down some of his observations on his art. I read them aloud and commented upon them. Then I took La Bruyère's chapter on *Ouvrages de l'esprit*. I then passed on to Fénelon's *Dialogues sur l'Eloquence* and his *Lettre à l'Académie Française*; I went over the ground carefully, choosing my points and always commenting by examples if need be from living writers. Vauvenargues's *Thoughts* and *Literary Characters* came next. I borrowed from Voltaire the articles on Taste and Style, in the *Dictionnaire Philosophique*, his *Temple of Taste*, and some passages from the letters in which he passes judg-

ment on Boileau, Racine and Corneille. I added, in order to widen my horizon at this particular moment, some reflections on the intellect of Goethe and on English taste, as exemplified in Coleridge. Marmontel, in his *Elements de Littérature*, furnished me with an article on Style, an admirable piece of writing. I took good care not to omit Buffon on the same subject, whose words crowned the whole. Finally, with the classic circle complete, I gave my young hearers Joubert as a sort of dessert and choice tidbit. Here was a meal-fit for Pythagoras!"

Who does not recognize, in the delicate play of Sainte-Beuve's fancy, the almost Spartan demands on himself which his conception of the duty of a critic imposed upon his time? Such a universal interest in literature, such conscientious preparation for the task before him, presupposed complete abstraction from society during the days of work. No one plodded more industriously than Sainte-Beuve, burying himself, as he did, among his books from morning till night, and only emerging on the one day intervening between the completion of one *Lundi* and the beginning of another. "A critic," he said,



"ought not to have too many friends and social relations—those obligations dictated by convention. . . . Without being exactly freebooters, as we have been called, we must be able to roam about at will; we must have elbow-room. Monsieur Janin wittily said one day to a lady who at an evening entertainment introduced him to a number of guests: 'You are procuring me so many friends that you rob me of all my spirit.'"

In a more serious vein, Sainte-Beuve insisted that the critic must scrupulously weigh his words. He must be sparing of superlatives and know the value of perspective. In discussing M. de Saint-Victor's critical manner, he said: "The author's preferences are expressed in an unmistakable way. He observes proper gradation, and groups literature and art as Raphael groups his School of Athens and Ingres his ceilings. Each genius, each talent, is placed according to its merits and on its own plane: *Gil Blas* is not on a level with *Don Quixote*." Sainte-Beuve had no patience with the easy-going, complaisant critic who carries his optimism into literature, identifies himself with no settled conviction, opposes no new movement, and, as critic,

is all things to all men. He acknowledged the exquisite good taste, in classic matters, of that once famous critic Huet, but he was repelled by the spineless amiability of Huet's judgment concerning French literature. "No doubt," he said, "he was incomparably more at home among the ancients than Boileau, who indeed seemed almost an ignoramus beside him; but of that keen literary feeling, that brisk movement, that impetuous judgment that seem to spring from a glowing heart, Huet had not a particle." Sainte-Beuve discriminated very sharply between writers who merely adorn literature and the "thundering minds" that arouse a century. "It is after all," he says, "the ignorant, like Pascal, Descartes and Rousseau, men who have read little, but who think and dare, that, for good or evil, stir the world and make it move." Few of those men that have aroused a century appealed to Sainte-Beuve as much as Franklin, of whom, while dwelling on his lack of certain literary refinements, he said:

"Franklin is by nature above the anxieties of the Childe Harolds or the susceptibilities of the Chateaubriands. We, of the outspoken French

race, might have wished that there had been something of all this in him. . . . Let us, however, look at Franklin such as he is, in his proper stature and in all his moral beauty. That judicious man, firm, astute, skilful, honest, remains unshaken when injustice approaches him or his compatriots. For many years he tries to enlighten public opinion in the mother country, and to avert extreme measures; until the last moment he does his utmost to bring about a reconciliation based on fairness; and when on the very eve of the final rupture, one of the influential men of England [Lord Howe] leaves him still some hope of reconciliation, tears of joy roll down his cheeks. But when, finally, hardened injustice and obstinate pride close all avenues to his countrymen, he is carried away by the loftiest and most invincible passion, and he who thinks that *every peace is good* and that *every war is bad*, is henceforth for war, for the holy war of patriotic and legitimate defence."

## LOWELL: PATRIOT AND COSMOPOLITAN

LOWELL'S fame as a critic has been overshadowed by his eminence in other fields, where public recognition is more easily obtained, or at least more spontaneously rendered. The range of his accomplishments was very wide. A poet whose Commemoration Ode stirred the heart of the nation to its depths, a brilliant satirist in prose and verse, a political writer of singular power, an admirable teacher and lecturer, a fascinating orator, conversationalist, and letter-writer, a skilful and dignified diplomat, and, above all, a pure and sagacious patriot—who would look, first and foremost, for the critic in so many-sided and picturesque a personality? Yet, the attentive reader of Lowell's works cannot fail to recognize that in all his activities—not seldom even in his poetry—the critical faculty was paramount. His ancestry amply accounts for his observant and reflective temperament, as it does for his love of Nature, especially in her rugged mood, his sympathy

with the sturdy untutored man, racy of the soil, his hard-headed Yankee sense of humor.

In a famous distich Grillparzer, referring to the beautiful hill that commands the finest view of Vienna, says: "If you look at the country around you from the heights of the Kahlenberg you will understand what I have written and what I am." Similarly, if we would know what Lowell was, and why he wrote as he did, we have to know New England and particularly Cambridge, where he was born and where he died. He was a man of the world, easily at home in the great capitals of Europe, but his musings ever took him back to the town on the Charles River. Puritan as he was in his sense of duty toward man and the State, his outlook on life and literature was that of the serene philosopher and the cosmopolitan critic. He disclaimed the title of scholar, but the extent of his reading was extraordinary, and his knowledge of both essentials and minutiae in literary matters was deep and sound beyond that of most specialists. He drew inspiration from English, French, Italian, Spanish and German sources, as well as from the ancients. No critic of simi-

lar importance in literary history has spoken of the glories of the past with more contagious enthusiasm and with a freer fancy. He conducts us through the highways and byways of many literatures at a leisurely gait, and though his wilful digressions, his bewildering allusiveness, at times threaten to obstruct our path, we surrender ourselves with delight to so fascinating and instructive a guide.

The most important critical work of James Russell Lowell is not to be found in the book reviews which, as editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, he contributed to its pages, though all his articles were scholarly criticism of a high order, sometimes seasoned with his characteristic wit. It is the essayist Lowell that gives us the measure of the critic.

Perhaps the ripest fruit of Lowell's learning and critical activity was his treatise on Dante—the outgrowth of that life-long familiarity with the poet of which Harvard students were to reap so rich a harvest; but it may be doubted whether this essay is to-day read with the same relish as his papers on lesser writers. He was most effective when least academic. Perhaps no other

international critic is so quotable. His pages bristle with the unexpected—with sallies of wit and humor, puns of varying quality, curious metaphors and quaint conceits, with deep sentiment and shrewd wisdom. And the whole, if not always the last word in literary criticism, is itself delectable literature.

Posterity alone can decide whether the critic was also the prophet. In the case of Lowell, the best international judgment has already confirmed his own in conspicuous instances. Thus his estimate of Carlyle has gradually superseded that extravagant eulogium which hailed in him the inspired prophet of a new gospel in history and morals.

Almost every page that Lowell wrote bears proof of his love of letters, his gusto in borrowing from a half-forgotten author, no matter in what language. Unsystematic, on the whole, his reading undeniably was. One of his most discriminating critics, Mr. Ferris Greenslet, well says of him: "Lowell, it is needless to say at this hour, was never quite a scholar in the German sense of the word, nor even in the modern American academic sense: but he was a scholar in

what we may perhaps think a more admirable sense—that in which the bookmen of the Renaissance were so.” Yet there were at least two foreign fields, besides Dante literature, in which Lowell was thoroughly at home: French language and literature of the ante-classic period, and the dramas of Calderon. Though he entered upon his post of American Minister to Spain with a comprehensive knowledge of Spanish literature, and a mastery of the language which soon procured him admission to the Spanish Academy, it was only to Calderon, and next to him to Cervantes, that he gave his heart. He revelled in Calderon as Grillparzer did in Lope. Allusions to Calderon give point to not a few of Lowell’s critical remarks; and they may come upon us, with his startling suddenness, in the most unexpected places. While on the ocean, he says: “When we were up with the Azores, we began to meet flying-fish and Portuguese men-of-war beautiful as the galley of Cleopatra, tiny craft that dared these seas before Columbus. I have seen one of the former rise from the crest of a wave, and, glancing from another some two hundred feet beyond, take a fresh flight of per-



haps as far. How Calderon would have simlized this pretty creature had he ever seen it! How would he have run him up and down the gamut of simile! If a fish, then a fish with wings; if a bird, then a bird, with fins; and so on, keeping up the light shuttle-cock of a conceit as is his wont."

Unconsciously, Lowell, in dwelling on Calderon's hunt for similes, has described the bent of his own mind. The Spanish dramatist is to him one of the great writers of all time. "For fascination of style and profound suggestion, it would be hard to name another author superior to Calderon, if indeed equal to him. His charm was equally felt by two minds as unlike each other as those of Goethe and Shelley. These in themselves are sufficient achievements, and the intellectual life of a nation could maintain itself on the unearned increment of these without further addition to its resources."

One of the most distinctive characteristics of Lowell's critical genius is the possession of a robust common sense—"horse sense" the colloquial phrase has termed it—which accompanied his cosmopolitan standards and in no way

jars with his lofty idealism. No one has written with greater admiration of Emerson than he. Transcendentalism, as personified in Emerson and illumined in his pages, was to him one thing; transcendentalism as lived by Thoreau and expounded by the lesser lights of New England, was quite another. There was need, in Lowell's day, for such a critical clearing of the atmosphere as his article on Thoreau.

Lowell, though fond of the great classic writers and never long separated from his Homer and Euripides, has been charged with indifference to Hellenism. There is certainly no evidence that he arrogated to himself the right to speak authoritatively on matters of classic art; but we cannot fail to recognize that he was as deeply imbued with the classic spirit as Goethe, Grillparzer, and Sainte-Beuve. He distinguished acutely between the conflicting claims of classicists and modernists, pleading for the moderns, but not as against the ancients.

Like every other great critic, Lowell had his own method; his discursiveness, his playful seriousness, the interfusion of the classic and the modern, the Gallic and the Puritan spirit, are

all part of his charm. But he could stick to his text as closely as any parson (indeed he often moralized as well as any), and it is precisely when he speaks on Greek art and the Greek drama that his argument is most closely-knit and serious.

In discussing Swinburne's *Tragedies* Lowell refers to the old dispute as to the comparative merits of the ancients and the moderns which far antedates Fontenelle's days, when it reached fever-heat. Like Sainte-Beuve, who, with all his admiration for the classics, ridicules those who cannot think without their permission, Lowell did his own thinking, after enjoying the best thought that ancients and moderns could offer him. That we neither honor the ancients nor profit ourselves by lifeless imitation of classic literature, Lowell shows in his own striking way.

As in the case of Sainte-Beuve, we have to know all that Lowell said of Goethe in order to concede that the occasional strictures of a foreign critic concerning the great German do not necessarily involve the crime of sacrilege. Lowell was even more outspoken in what he said

of Lessing. Stahr's *Life of Lessing* served him as a text—one might say a pretext—for a homily on the heaviness of German style, and there is too much merciless dissection of the luckless biographer to enable Lowell to do full justice to his hero; but if the looseness of structure disturbs the symmetry of the essay, the witty digressions certainly illumine and adorn it. Lowell was not lacking in due appreciation of Lessing; he admired, perhaps, no other character in literature more fully, but he did not find in him an unfailing source of inspiration, as he did in Dante, Cervantes or, most of all possibly, in the old English dramatists and poets. Chaucer, Dryden, Marlowe, Chapman, Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger and Ford—how lovingly he dwelt on them, what life and color they all assumed in his hands, what rich mines of critical suggestions and comparisons he opens up to us in his glowing pages! They had nourished his youth, and he returned to them in old age, his unforgettable early New England impressions enriched by all that old England had been to him during his honored residence there. Nor had any American Minister ever given to Eng-

land what James Russell Lowell could give while representing his country at the Court of St. James. The quiet Harvard scholar at once took rank not only with famous old-world scholars and *littérateurs*, with ripe diplomats and statesmen, but with the most accomplished orators and conversationalists, all the impressive personalities that graced the best of London society.

It is not too much to say that his addresses at the numerous public functions to which he willingly lent the never-failing charm of his presence, marked an era in the intercourse between the two countries. English philosophers and workingmen alike listened spellbound to the message of the American Minister, who, on assuming the presidency of the Birmingham and Midland Institute, expounded to the old world the meaning of "Democracy" in the new; the literary societies of London asked themselves who of their number could speak of Fielding or Coleridge with a deeper appreciation of the treasures of English literature, and temper criticism with such matchless grace. How deftly he mingled, in his address at the unveiling of the

bust of Fielding, praise of the great novelist with denunciation of that British Philistinism which hesitates, on moral grounds, to recognize his excellence.

With all the freedom of the accredited Minister of the great modern Republic and of the ancient Republic of Letters, Lowell lashed those critics who would read a Fielding out of polite literature because of his offences against polite society. Himself endowed with that penetrating mother wit which goes to the root of things, Lowell possessed in equal degree the gift of imagination, without which all the other qualifications of the critic go for naught. In his address on Coleridge he embodied what may be considered his ideal of the critic's equipment.

There is a curious antagonism between Lowell's aversion to pedantic display of learning and the profusion of antiquarian lore in his own pages. "I am by temperament impatient of detail in communicating what I have acquired," he says in the Prefatory Note to his Essays, "and too often put into a parenthesis or a note conclusions arrived at by long study and reflection." He was indeed as lavish of

such condensed wisdom as Sainte-Beuve, and he appreciated brevity and directness in others perhaps even more than the French critic. He realized that "simplicity, where it is not a careless gift of the Muses, is the last and most painful achievement of conscientious self-denial." He had a loving partiality for the leisurely pace of an Izaak Walton, but biographical amplitude in the case of lesser lights found no favor in his eyes. "Biography," he amusingly said, "has found out a process by which what is human may be so thrust upon us as to become *in-human*." Here again, as so often in criticising the moderns, he holds up the ancients as a model. "Plutarch, a man of the most many-sided moral and intellectual interests, has a truer sense of proportion, and tempers his amiable discursiveness with an eye to his neighbor's dial. And in his case the very names of his heroes are mostly so trumpet-like as both to waken attention and to warrant it, ushering in the bearers of them like that *flourish* on the Elizabethan stage which told that a king was coming."

The kings in literature alone occupied

Lowell's mind permanently, as they did the minds of the other great critics of whom we have spoken. Like them, when weary of the petty concerns of the day, he returns to the ancients and their golden age, which his fancy so often contrasts with the baser metal of our modern epoch. "I have my own suspicion sometimes," he muses, "that the true age of flint is before and not behind us. . . . The siege of Troy will be remembered when those of Vicksburg and Paris are forgotten."



## PERMANENT LITERARY STANDARDS

THE value of the lessons taught us by the eminent writers we are considering would be largely lost if we failed to see their bearing on the literary questions of the day. The critical faculty is commonly supposed to be antagonistic to creative ability; but in Goethe, Grillparzer, and Lowell we find the productive as well as the critical faculty equally manifest. In the case of Sainte-Beuve the prodigious mass of his critical work outweighs in importance even his uniquely valuable *History of Port-Royal*. It is rare indeed to find the analytic gift joined to such fruitful activity as characterized the lives of Goethe, Grillparzer, Sainte-Beuve, and Lowell. It was their incessant and passionate endeavor to hold up to their countrymen the great models of foreign literatures, in order to bring home to them the excellence of their own great writers. Their chosen field was the universal realm of thought and beauty. Imbued with reverence for classic ideals, they are equally inspired by the wisdom of the East; they

seek what is admirable in German, French, Spanish and Italian literature, and turn aside to gather flowers from the literary bypaths of other nations. Their sympathetic ken embraced all great works that have stood the test of time; and they passed by the mediocre and ignoble, regardless of the insistence of contemporary clamor. They never wrote or spoke to please the crowd, but always to satisfy their literary conscience; they appealed only to the cultivated taste of the mature and receptive. Grillparzer's solitary critical jottings during so many years bear the same note of sincerity and fulness of knowledge as Goethe's discursive talks with his scholarly intimates, Lowell's elaborate reviews, or Sainte-Beuve's Monday *Causeries*, which, with apparently conversational ease, were addressed to all literary Paris. Though the American critic was far more prodigal of recondite lore than the German, Austrian and French, all four possessed a wholesome dread of pedantry, and they never criticised in order to demonstrate their own superior wisdom. They bore in mind Lessing's warning: "A writer of note will not write merely to show his wit and

scholarship; he addresses himself to the best and most enlightened of his time and deigns to write only what may please them or what will affect their feelings." In this aspect the critical work of Goethe, Grillparzer, Sainte-Beuve and Lowell is identical, however different in form and expression.

No critic has condemned more severely than Goethe the empty parade of knowledge. "Some books," he said, "seem to have been written not for the purpose of teaching us something, but to let us know that the author knew something," and as for the limitations of the critic, he remarked: "Rightly considered we learn only from books which are beyond our ability to criticise. The author of a book which we can criticise would have to learn from us." But no one has spoken with greater emphasis than Goethe upon the importance of constantly adding to our knowledge if we would rightly judge literature and life. "Talent of every kind," he said to Eckermann, "is fed by knowledge, and only through it can it exercise its strength." He said of himself to Chancellor Müller, in 1830: "Would it have been worth my while to live to

the age of eighty if I had always thought the same thoughts? I strive to think every day of something different, something new, in order not to get stale. One must change incessantly, and renew and rejuvenate himself, in order not to become rigid."

In the steady pursuit of wisdom all the greatest geniuses attained their perfection. Young talents, conscious of their power, shrink from the slow process of weeding and pruning with which even genius in its prime cannot dispense. Vehemence of assertion is a natural concomitant of youth, but recognition of this fact does not absolve the critic from the duty of pointing out to gifted minds the value of moderation and self-discipline. It is well known how Goethe, after emerging from the period of his own youthful turbulence, recoiled from the seething spirit of Schiller's *Robbers*. He speaks of Schiller's powerful but immature talent which had "flooded the country with a torrent of moral and dramatic paradoxes."

The period of Schiller's intellectual lawlessness was brief and perhaps a necessary condition of the development of his genius. In the

case of so many writers of the day who defy tradition and set up standards of their own, lawlessness is the only law of their being. No growth is possible, because the seed is lacking. They start with deliberate ignorance and deceitful paradox, and end where they began. The current insistence on the right of the individual to cultivate his talent in his own way deceives only the ignorant. Individual liberty of this kind can result only in collective enslavement. "You will find," said Goethe, speaking of art, "that every great master has used what was excellent in his predecessors, and this fact has made him great. Men like Raphael do not grow spontaneously. They had their root in the great works of antiquity. Had they not made use of the advantages open to them, there would be little to say about them." What is true of art is equally true of literature. The restlessness of modern endeavor in literature and art, call it by whatever name we please, betokens only weakness. We are invited to call the bewildering change progress, but for one genius who creates something original there are a thousand blunderers, who, in attempting to

throw discredit on the old, merely demonstrate the hopelessness of the new. "To make innovations," says Lessing, "may be the characteristic of a great mind or a small one. The great discards the old because it has been found insufficient or false, the small because it is old. While the former is influenced by reason, the latter is by disgust. Genius wants to do more than its predecessor, he who apes genius, merely something different." And Goethe wrote: "There is no more stupid error than the belief of talented young people that they lose all credit for originality by admitting the truth of that which has already been recognized as such by others." "There is constant talk about originality," he said to Eckermann, "but what does it mean? As soon as we are born the world around us begins to act upon us, and so it goes on until the end. And, after all, what can we call our own but our energy, strength and determination. If I could recount all I owe to my great predecessors and contemporaries there would be little left indeed that I could call my own."

It is not easy to realize how much harm is done by the complaisant *laudator temporis*

*praesentis* who decries all attempts of serious critics to set bounds to the ambition of young aspirants to literary laurels. It has indeed always been an ungrateful task to check immature exuberance. Lessing wrote: "We have now a school of critics whose chief criticism consists in throwing suspicion on all criticism. 'Genius, genius,' they repeat endlessly. 'Genius disregards all rules. What genius creates becomes the rule.' Thus they flatter genius—in my opinion—in order that they may be regarded as geniuses themselves. But they show too clearly that they have not a spark of it themselves when they add in the same breath: 'Rules stifle genius.' As if genius could be suppressed by any power in the world! . . . Not every critic is a genius, but every genius is a born critic. Genius proves its own rules."

The public cannot be argued into mistaking mediocrity for genius, nor does it long mistake genius for mediocrity. But the effect of the so-called kindly critic on mediocre authors is disastrous. He not only encourages feeble effort, but literally calls it into being. Dozens of young authors spring into existence and find

publishers because dozens of others have written before them, who, thanks to the plaudits of indiscriminating critics and the thoughtlessness of indiscriminating readers, achieved a fleeting notoriety. It is a misfortune to any country to have its literary taste debauched by critical arbiters who have so little equipment for their calling. France, having for centuries cherished veneration for literary genius, has perhaps set the world the best example of an almost unbroken line of critical authorities, of whom Sainte-Beuve, in the recent past, was merely the foremost representative.

The trite warning to the sceptical critic to look out for unrecognized genius need scarcely be met by the obvious observation that unmistakable genius cannot be mistaken, and that even striking talent is quick to find recognition. Nor is it profitable, in the case of contemporaries, to raise the question of the difference between genius and talent. Posterity alone, that is to say, the best international judgment, in the ripeness of time, can assign to creative force its definite rank. Grillparzer, referring to the extravagant claims made for the lawless genius we all so well



know, penned the lines: "Denn das Genie, es läuft in allen Gassen, doch seltener als je ist das Talent." (Genius indeed may be met with at every street corner, but talent is scarcer than ever.) Goethe has said the final word on the subject in his remark:

"What is genius but the power of doing deeds that can stand before God and Nature, of producing permanent results? All of Mozart's works are of this kind; there is in them a productive power which acts upon generation after generation, and it will be many a day before that is exhausted. This is equally the case with other great composers and with all great artists. How potent has been the influence upon succeeding centuries of Phidias and Raphael, of Dürer, and Holbein! He who first invented the forms and proportions of Old-German architecture, which in the course of time made possible the Strassburg Minster and the Cologne Cathedral, was likewise a genius; for his thought has retained its productive power to this day and still exerts its influence. Luther was a very formidable genius. His influence has lasted many a day, and we cannot foretell how many

centuries may elapse before he will cease to be productive. Lessing disclaimed the lofty title of genius, but his permanent influence tells against his disclaimer. There are in literature, on the other hand, other great names who during their lifetime were considered great geniuses, but whose influence ceased with their life, and who therefore were less important than they and others thought."

It is the crowning merit of the great international critics that they held their balance true. The recognition of talent never led them to overpraise its power, and as there can be no just criticism of others which is not based on the clear recognition of one's own limitations, so they saw clearly what they themselves could and could not do. Goethe gave a striking illustration of the wholly impersonal attitude of self-criticism in an oft-quoted remark concerning Tieck.

"Tieck," he said to Eckermann, "is a man of great talent, and no one can be more sensible of his great merits than myself, but it is a mistake to raise him beyond his own height and place him on the same level with me. I can say so

plainly, for it matters nothing to me, inasmuch as I have not made myself. I should act similarly if I compared myself with Shakespeare, who also did not make himself, but who is nevertheless a being of a higher order, to whom I look up with reverence." Now this just recognition of the limits of praise is precisely what distinguishes the true critic from his counterfeit. Every nation furnishes instances of this inability "to see ourselves as others see us." In its worst manifestation it leads to blind chauvinism, and it is a national calamity if great literary talent lends its influence to this perversion of the natural love of one's country. It would be easy to point to conspicuous examples of the harmful stimulus given to imperialistic ideas by seductive poetic appeals—ideas which, in the long run, lead only to national isolation. It may be said without exaggeration that the recrudescence of the mediæval idea according to which the interests of nations are always opposed to each other is fostered by the thoughtless literary critic who magnifies the importance of the achievements of his own country. Self-glorification on the part of one nation

is certain to arouse self-glorification on the part of another. It is to be regretted that even so eminent a critic as Hermann Grimm allowed himself to speak of Goethe's *Faust* as "the greatest work of the greatest poet of all times and all nations"—a statement which we may well contrast with Goethe's saner estimate of himself as compared with Shakespeare.

As we turn the pages of the masters of criticism, and compare their ways of treating the subjects that interested them in common, we are struck, above all, by their reverence for the past, their deference to the great, their moderation and modesty. There is in them not a trace of the shallow piquancy, the elaborate paradox, the cynical self-complacency of the so-called brilliant critic of the day. No country in the world needs the example of these sober, self-respecting and respectful men of letters more than ours, where the teachings of our own wise men of the past are in danger of being forgotten. We shall, let us hope, again see the rise of literary genius among us, but we must beware lest we lose the standards by which genius is measured. What avails all else if we

lack discrimination and self-restraint? "To miss decorum," says Professor Irving Babbitt, in an article on Diderot, "is to become incapable of what is best in art and literature (not to speak of life itself) ; it is to lose the secret of selection and the grand manner."

To what else did the great critics owe their influence but to this "secret of selection"? They heard the call of the present as we do, but they never exaggerated its claims, and they felt the need of going back, again and again, to the great masters who have permanently enriched the world. He who does not feel this need merely gives proof of his intellectual poverty. Surely, what the wisest could not be without, lesser minds can ill afford to spare. No one returned more constantly to the perennial sources of inspiration than Goethe. To read a great writer or see a great picture was a constant incentive to read and see again. "Molière," he said to Eckermann, "is so great that he astonishes us anew every time we read him. He stands alone. . . . I read several of his plays every year, just as, from time to time, I look at engravings of pictures by the Great Italian masters. For we

small men are not able to preserve within us the greatness of such things, and must therefore return to them from time to time in order to refresh our impressions."

It is idle to imagine that literary genius can afford to go its own solitary way, scorning knowledge, and be the better for it. The gifted minds may select their own manner of observing and studying, but observe and study they must, and ignorance becomes them as ill as it does the average man. Matthew Arnold has well said: "Wordsworth cared little for books, and disparaged Goethe. I admire Wordsworth, as he is, so much that I cannot wish him different; and it is vain, no doubt, to imagine such a man different from what he is, to suppose that he *could* have been different. But surely the one thing wanting to make Wordsworth an even greater poet than he is—his thought richer, and his influence of wider application—was that he should have read more books, among them, no doubt, those of that Goethe whom he disparaged without reading them."

If we learned nothing else from the great writers, we could still profit by their serenity,

which is so lamentably absent from the writing of the day. They found pleasure in their work and they gave pleasure to the reader. The master dramatists wrote no problem plays, the master novelists no pathological novels, the master poets no morbid poetry, though they too knew something of the problems of mankind and the evils of society. Goethe, Grillparzer, Sainte-Beuve and Lowell, with all their diversities of temper and character, wrote in a serene spirit. What they created and what they strove for tended to make the world better and happier. They had in common the trait which, as Emerson says, "properly belongs to the poet. I mean his cheerfulness, without which no man can be a poet, for beauty is his aim. . . . The true bards have been noted for their firm and cheerful temper." Indeed, the practice of all great critics shows that cheerfulness is an important part of their creed. The serene atmosphere which pervades the writings of Goethe, Grillparzer, Sainte-Beuve, and Lowell is the result of an inner enthusiasm for what is beautiful and excellent, and enthusiasm is incompatible with a cynical spirit. Our modern brood of melan-

choly, formless, paradoxical and insincere writers would have been intolerable to these critics, with their keen detestation of sham. There were unhappy poets in those days as well, but who reads them to-day? "All the poets," says Goethe, "write as if they were ill and the whole world a hospital. They all speak of the woes and the miseries of this earth and of the joys of a hereafter; all are dissatisfied. . . . This is a real abuse of poetry, which was given to us to hide the petty discords of life and to make man contented with the world and with his condition."

Lowell, in a passage of whimsical wisdom enforces the lesson of cheerfulness in modern life. His good humor smiles through his very doubts. "It is noteworthy that literature, as it becomes more modern, becomes also more melancholy, and that he who keeps most constantly to the minor key of hopelessness, or strikes the deepest note of despair, is surest of at least momentary acclaim. Nay, do not some sources of happiness flow less full or cease to flow as settlement and sanitation advance, even as the feeders of our streams are dried by the



massacre of our forests? We cannot have a new boulevard in Florence unless at sacrifice of those ancient city-walls in which inspiring memories had for so many ages built their nests and reared their broods of song. Did not the plague, brooded and hatched in those smotherers of fresh air, the slits that thoroughfares the older town, give us the *Decameron*? And was the price too high? We cannot widen and ventilate the streets of Rome without grievous wrong to the city that we loved, and yet it is well to remember that this city too had built itself out of and upon the ruins of that nobler Rome which gave it all the wizard hold it had on our imagination. The Social Science Congress rejoices in changes that bring tears to the eyes of the painter and the poet. Alas! we cannot have a world made expressly for Mr. Ruskin, nor keep it if we could, more's the pity. Are we to confess, then, that the world grows less lovable as it grows more convenient and comfortable? that beauty flees before the step of the Social Reformer as the wild pensioners of Nature before the pioneers? that the lion will lie down with the lamb sooner than picturesqueness with

health and prosperity? Morally, no doubt, we are bound to consider the Greatest Good of the Greatest Number, but there is something in us, *vagula, blandula*, that refuses, and rightly refuses, to be Benthamized; that asks itself in a timid whisper, 'Is it so certain, then, that the Greatest Good is also the Highest? and has it been to the Greatest or to the Smallest Number that man has been most indebted?' For myself, while I admit, because I cannot help it, certain great and manifest improvements in the general well-being, I cannot stifle a suspicion that the Modern Spirit, to whose tune we are marching so cheerily, may have borrowed of the Pied Piper of Hamelin the instrument whence he draws such bewitching music."

What chiefly repels the cautious observer of the various manifestations of the modern spirit in literature is its vociferous positiveness and pretence. The watchword "progress" covers a multitude of reactionary sins. In the general rejection of the standards of the past which we are told must give place to the nameless wisdom of an unknown future, we simply go back to ancient barbarism. The devotees of "natural-

ism" have wisely chosen their designation. They have flung civilization to the winds and returned to the state of savage nature. Little do they reckon or care what mankind loses in the process.

How far have we wandered, in these days when every literary aspirant insists on the righteousness of his own gospel, from the example of the great critics, whose whole activity showed that they had no tolerance for the gospel of infallibility, either in individuals or nations. "Let no one imagine," said the wise Goethe, "that the world has been waiting for him as for a Messiah." Modern literature is perpetually on the lookout for some new prophet. Salvation is to come now from one new preacher, now from another—the text does not matter, so it be new and startling.

Can the world in the long run dispense with simplicity and loveliness and lose the possessions which make literature and life precious? "We cannot yet afford," answers Emerson, "to drop Homer, nor Æschylus, nor Plato, nor Aristotle, nor Archimedes." Posterity will not side with the modern critics who encourage the

turbulent lawlessness of the moderns; for praise of the ignoble is not only an offence against æsthetics, but against the very order of society. Literary conscience concerns itself with deeper things than novelty of theme and piquancy of treatment, and the sense of beauty refuses to be satisfied with the realistic search for the surface truth of things. Goethe has said a beautiful word on this subject:

“Until recently the world believed in the heroism of a Lucretia or of a Mucius Scævola, and this belief inspired us with warmth and enthusiasm. But now historical criticism tells us that those heroes never lived and must be considered as fables and fictions produced by the lofty imagination of the Romans. But of what use is such paltry truth to us? If the Romans were great enough to invent such heroes, we ought at least to be great enough to believe in them.”

It is this recognition of the power of the deeper truth, this seriousness of purpose, this perennial search for wisdom and loveliness, that made the master critics what they are.

## FEUCHTERSLEBEN THE PHILOSOPHER

FEW works dealing with philosophic questions in a popular form have been as successful as Feuchtersleben's *Hygiene of the Soul* (*Zur Diätetik der Seele*). Published originally in 1838, at Vienna, it has maintained its interest to this day. The book has been translated into several languages, but the personality of its author is still practically unknown to American readers. Yet literature contains few nobler lives than that of Ernst Baron von Feuchtersleben.

Grillparzer, whose caustic pen spared few contemporary celebrities, wrote, in 1851, of the philosopher as follows:

"I became acquainted with Feuchtersleben at a comparatively late period. Therefore and because our relations were mainly of a literary nature, I know practically nothing of his previous life, and must limit myself to remarks concerning his character and his intellect. These are fairly open to the scrutiny of others; his own innate and most genuine modesty would under

any circumstances have prevented him from alluding to his personal affairs.

“Married to a woman who was the opposite of himself as to habits, temperament and education, he succeeded by yielding no less than insisting, by his intellectual superiority and his easy good nature, in creating for himself a wedded happiness the perfection of which has perhaps never been equalled. This alone, while testifying to the strength of his character, marks him as what he was in every respect—a truly wise man.

“Honesty, truthfulness, kindliness and modesty formed the basis of his character. He had the right to say of himself: ‘I have had to fight for whatever I am,’ for he never surrendered a conviction, or deviated from the strictest path of duty, in order to gain an advantage.

“In speaking of his truthfulness, I do not mean truthful merely in his relation to others, for that is included in the very term ‘honesty’; I mean truthful toward himself—a quality which has become rare nowadays, particularly in Germany. He never simulated great ideas, improvised convictions, cherished imaginary

cravings. Not only in his thoughts, but in his feelings, he was true and consistent. He knew the limits of his capacity, and would not have overstepped them if a hundred journals had offered him pecuniary inducements.

"No field of human knowledge appears to have been strange to him. In the domain of philosophy Kant was the man after his own heart. That philosophy of modesty, the culminating point of whose system is the humble: 'I know not,' a philosophy which starts with a body of facts that neither requires proof nor can be made to yield it, which is quite content to comprise within itself all that is logically correct and conducive to the moral welfare of all, which, precisely because it sets bounds to thought, makes it possible for man's aspiration and emotion to fill the existing gap by religion and art—Kant's philosophy was also Feuchtersleben's.

"His chief doctrine and his own aim and practice were the attainment of culture, that is to say, the fullest development and harmonious agreement of all intellectual faculties and natural gifts. Hence Goethe was his ideal. He

watched with the most genuine devotion the unfolding of youthful talent, even in those writers whose works were in no way influenced by him; he was intent, in his criticism, on dwelling upon every good point, emphasizing each happy turn and thought, always looking for the hidden meaning, endeavoring to supplement and suggest what was lacking, and entering wholly into the author's intentions. He was untiring in critical appreciations of this sort. That is what I meant in speaking of his kindness. His self-sacrificing devotion, joined to all his other qualities, completed a nature endowed with the most perfect charm."

Ernst Baron von Feuchtersleben was born in Vienna, on the 29th of April, 1806. He was descended from a Saxon family who had settled in Austria at the beginning of the eighteenth century. His father, whom the son describes as "a man of serious and stern character, devoted to his civic duties in a spirit of tireless self-sacrifice," attained the rank of aulic councillor in the Austrian civil service. The child, delicate and early left motherless, passed his first years in the country, and at the age of



six was placed in the Theresianische Akademie at Vienna, an institution where the sons of noblemen were educated for the service of the state. There he remained until his nineteenth year. The education he received was, according to his own statement, "wholly wrong. The instruction was in the hands of priests, over whom was placed a soldier. I saw the talents of the most promising young men wither away under the influence of priestly pride and soldierly brutality. Twice every day, not infrequently three times, we had to go to church, and thus every religious feeling was stifled in us. However, men develop regardless of wind and weather and tyranny, and I saw under this system young men grow up whose brows bore the stamp of Sparta and Rome."

There was, indeed, a good deal of the Spartan in young Feuchtersleben himself. His teacher of history, the enlightened Father Boniface, fired his susceptible heart with his tales of antique stoicism. Friedrich Hebbel, the editor of Feuchtersleben's works, relates that the young inmate of the Theresianum at one time resolved to do without his bed, and slept many nights on

the bare floor; in order to train his will-power still further, he left his favorite dishes untouched and half starved himself. He even refused to avail himself of the occasional permission to visit his paternal home, much as he longed for it. He gave a still greater proof of his self-control when one of his closest friends, in order to test his moral strength, accused him publicly of some delinquency of which he himself had been guilty. Feuchtersleben, after having heard who his accuser was, silently submitted to punishment, and when his friend, bursting into tears, craved his forgiveness, he quietly answered: "I only regret that you found it necessary to resort to a lie in order to learn the strength of my friendship for you."

With all its defects, the Theresianum furnished the eager young student sound instruction in the classics and the natural sciences. He found abundant opportunity to indulge his poetic fancy as well as his early tendency toward philosophic reflection. In addition to the ancient thinkers, he studied Spinoza, Lessing, Herder, Kant, Schiller and Goethe. Much against his father's will, Feuchtersleben, on

leaving the academy, decided to study medicine. He entered the University of Vienna in 1825, and in the same year, at the age of nineteen, published two philosophic papers—"On the Study of Nature" and "Concerning Genius." He remained nearly nine years at the university, engaged in the study of medicine, physiology, philosophy, æsthetics, and Oriental literature. In an autobiographic memoir—a model of modest brevity—which Feuchtersleben prepared, in 1849, for the Vienna Academy of Sciences, of which he had been elected a member, he alludes to the inspiration which he derived during his academic years from a circle of intimate friends which included, among others who later achieved fame, the composer Franz Schubert.

Shortly after Feuchtersleben had taken his degree of doctor of medicine, in 1834, his father, in a fit of nervous despondency, committed suicide, and the young physician and his only brother were left absolutely without means. Nevertheless, Feuchtersleben was courageous enough to marry the girl to whom he had long been paying court, and to enter upon the practice of medicine. The results of his professional

activity were pitifully meagre. The few patients whom he found, abashed by his baronial title, hesitated to offer him a pecuniary compensation for his services, and sent him instead some token of their gratitude, generally useless trinkets, so that the young couple were soon in the grip of the most grinding poverty. They were compelled to spend their evenings in the dark, as they could not afford the luxury of a candle light. Fortunately, Feuchtersleben's literary ability enabled him gradually to eke out a modest living. He wrote articles on historical, philosophical and æsthetic subjects for some Vienna periodicals, and published in 1835 his first medical work. Professor Max Neuburger, in his memorial address on Feuchtersleben, delivered at the Vienna Medical Society on the hundredth anniversary of his birth, speaks of this work, *Ueber das hippokratische erste Buch von der Diät*, as "one of the gems of medico-historical literature."

*The Hygiene of the Soul* was not originally written for publication. In his autobiographic data for the Vienna Academy of Sciences Feuchtersleben modestly remarks: "I may per-

haps take occasion to speak in this place of the influence exerted, much to my astonishment, by a little book, similar in spirit to the work just mentioned [a treatise on psychiatry], but written for an entirely different purpose. This little book, entitled *Zur Diätetik der Seele*, was really the result of silent self-contemplation after many trials and much suffering, and was intended as a solace to myself only. The kindly interest of a few friends, who had read some parts in manuscript, is alone responsible for the publication of the book. I had no reason to expect a loud response and never looked for one. But the old *habent sua fata libelli* once more proved true, and I attained a result that took me completely by surprise. Judging from many remarks and letters that reached me, it looked as if during a period of public agitation a faithful observer of his own emotions had succeeded in touching the minds of others so as to call forth an immediate response, rousing them, as it were, to a consciousness of what had been felt by all, without having been uttered by anyone."

The success of the book was instantaneous. Feuchtersleben's place in the medical circles of

Vienna, as well as in literature, was now secure. In 1839 appeared his treatise, *Ueber die Gewissheit und Würde der Heilkunst* (Concerning the Precision and Dignity of Medical Science), of which Professor Neuburger, in the memorial address referred to, says: "Never have the cause of the medical profession and the dignity of medical science been upheld with more profundity and moral fervor. Indeed, the present moment seems most opportune for a republication of this work."

Feuchtersleben's merits as a medical thinker and writer were acknowledged by his election, in 1840, as Secretary of the Vienna Society of Physicians, a position in which he displayed during a number of years the greatest zeal and ability. In 1841 appeared the epoch-making *Pathological Anatomy* of Rokitansky, and Feuchtersleben, says Professor Neuburger, was foremost among Vienna scientists in seizing the importance of that work and of the equally significant diagnostic discoveries of Skoda.\* In his papers read before the Society of Physi-

\* Joseph Skoda (1805-81), Professor at the University of Vienna, whose *Abhandlung über die Auskultation und Perkussion* marked a new era in medical diagnostics.

cians he "arrived at deductions which are confirmed, in their entirety, by the subsequent development of medical science."

In 1844 Feuchtersleben began his famous lectures on medical psychology, as the first incumbent of that chair at the University of Vienna. The students thronged his lecture room to such an extent that the professors whose hours coincided with his own found their rooms deserted. The results of these lectures were embodied in his *Lehrbuch der ärztlichen Seelenkunde*, which appeared in London, in 1847, as "The Principles of Medical Psychology." The work was described by the English editors as "remarkable for the clear and methodical arrangement of its matter, for its depth of erudition and research, and for the impartial and philosophical spirit in which it is written."

In 1845 the medical faculty of the University of Vienna elected Feuchtersleben as its dean. But although adored by the students, and acknowledged everywhere as one of the leading lights among the professors, he despaired of his ability to carry out any of the reforms in the educational life of Austria which were so

urgently called for by every friend of progress and so dear to his own heart. Metternich's rule stifled every manifestation of independence and liberalism in the university, as in the public schools. The influence of the clergy was paramount and the press was muzzled. "Where there is neither intelligence nor morality," Feuchtersleben wrote in his diary, after entering upon his duties as dean, "I am powerless to accomplish anything." Nevertheless, his personality so impressed itself upon his colleagues and the governing classes that, in 1847, he was appointed "Vice-Director of Medico-Surgical Studies," a position which placed him at the head of the conferences held by the entire body of university professors. Among his public utterances as dean was a remarkable address delivered, in the presence of the court-chancellor, in April, 1847, in which he outlined a plan for the complete reform of public education, with academic freedom as its corner stone. What he then advocated was more emphatically insisted on in the petitions to the government, drawn up at Feuchtersleben's instigation, in March and April, 1848, when the progress of



the revolutionary movement emboldened the champions of liberty to formulate their demands in unmistakable terms.

In the following July Feuchtersleben was offered the portfolio of Public Instruction in the liberal Cabinet which had assumed power. He refused the offer, but agreed to take the position of Under Secretary in the ministry of Public Instruction, where he thought he could wholly devote himself, free from direct political responsibility, to the task of educational reform.\* The place of Vice-Director of Medico-Surgical Studies, which he temporarily resigned, was to be kept open for him. He threw himself into his new duties with all the ardor of his soul. "I may say," he wrote in a memoir submitted to the Academy of Sciences, "there could be no more congenial task for me. It fulfilled all my desires and suited perfectly whatever capacity I had. Thus I ventured to make the attempt."

The educational reforms effected by Feuch-

\* Feuchtersleben's modest preference for the inferior position recalls Condorcet's refusal to accept the post of Inspector of Coinage offered him by Turgot, which refusal he coupled with the suggestion that he be entrusted with the task of carrying out some minor reforms.

tersleben in the four months during which he held office were of the most far-reaching character. Measures of this kind, which necessitated the removal of professors who had outgrown their usefulness by younger men, created much ill-feeling against their author, and this was augmented by the impatience of the revolutionary hotspurs in whose eyes the pace of wise Feuchtersleben was not rapid enough. The events of October, 1848—the fury of street mobs, the flight of the Emperor, the murder of the War Minister, Count Latour—which foreshadowed the speedy triumph of the reactionary powers, forced him to tender his resignation. “He had come into conflict,” says Grillparzer, “with something utterly antagonistic to his nature—brute force.” Feuchtersleben intended to re-enter upon his duties at the university as professor and vice-director, but all the members of the faculty, swayed by various motives, joined in an official protest to the new ministry against his resumption of these offices. Deeply wounded, Feuchtersleben retired into private life. He busied himself with outlining a history of education and wrote some lectures on

anthropology, but his physical strength was unequal to the shock sustained. He lingered four months in the grasp of an agonizing malady, which, however, could not wholly extinguish the serenity of his soul. "For entire days," says the poet Hebbel, "he lay motionless, his eyes fixed upon one object, and uttered not a single word; but when night came he grew talkative and enjoyed the company of his faithful wife; he took an interest in everybody and everything, and sometimes even his old humor and gaiety returned. It seemed as though his strength increased toward evening and fled with the morning—as though the sun had ceased to hold out blessings to him and had made way for the stars." He expired September 3, 1848, in his forty-fourth year. His death aroused Austria to a sense of her loss. The leading citizens of Vienna followed the remains of her noble son to their resting place, and his praises resounded far beyond the confines of the monarchy. English scholars and physicians assembled to do honor to his memory, and French scientific bodies sent, posthumously, a diploma in recognition of his achievements. Nearly two

years elapsed, owing to the political unrest, before the Medical Society of Vienna could assemble to do justice to Feuchtersleben's services to science and humanity.

## THE HYGIENE OF THE SOUL

FEUCHTERSLEBEN'S treatise is, in its essence, a plea for moral, intellectual, and physical health through the exercise of will power. Firmness of will, he reasons, makes us what we are, and as all created beings represent merely force in action, man's best possession is the energy with which he asserts himself, even though it be but energy imposed upon him from without. If it does not spring spontaneously from his own breast, let him, by a supreme effort, put himself in a condition where his will *must* obey.

Feuchtersleben claims for the human will not only an inherent power of resistance to deleterious influences, but would have us exercise our will power aggressively, so as to keep the body in good health. In so far as the mind influences the development of the body, that influence will manifest itself in bodily beauty as well as in bodily health. Emotional habits and the exercise of the will determine character and guide the spontaneous movements of the muscles, hence they determine the facial fea-

tures, which express what we generally call beauty or its opposite. Every oft-repeated facial trait, be it smiling, crying, twitching, sneering or frowning, leaves its trace in the soft parts of the face, recording, as it were, what has taken place, and making each successive reproduction of the act easier, until finally the imprint on the muscles and tissues becomes permanent. And the play of the muscles cannot continue long without leaving its traces on the underlying bony structure. Passionate persons have in old age far more facial wrinkles than those of a placid disposition; their skin is much more frequently contracted and expanded by their gestures, and the resulting lines, consequently, remain forever.

What takes place in the tender parts which give the face its expression, occurs equally in other organs of the human system. When we are freed from oppressive care we draw a deep breath, and the chest necessarily expands in doing so. Repeated action of this kind is certain to affect favorably the respiratory organs. On the other hand, he whose circulation is impeded by depressing emotional suffering and

who continues to languish, will not escape the consequences of such a condition, as shown in diminished secretion, impaired nutrition, etc. The earlier in life and the more frequently such conditions occur—the greater their intensity and their influence upon the temperament of the individual—the more inevitable and the more plainly manifest will be the imprint, in form and action, upon the body throughout life. The human organism represents a living circle, all parts of which work together in close interaction. The story told by the pale, wrinkled face is also betrayed by the feeble voice, the faltering step, the characterless handwriting, the irresolute mood, by susceptibility to changes of weather, and the liability to the inroads of disease. The body is poisoned, or—as the case may be—preserved and healed by the products of the seed sown by the mind. Beauty itself is in a certain sense but the outward token of health; the harmony of all bodily functions shows itself in the harmonious result—beauty of form. If thus virtue beautifies and vice vitiates, who will deny that virtue preserves health, while vice promotes disease?

Nature's judgments are secret; they are rendered slowly, but infallibly; she keeps account even of those transgressions which shun the eyes of men and are not amenable to their laws. Her actions, eternal as everything that emanates from the source of all power, extend from generation to generation, and the late descendant, who despairingly broods over the secret of his sufferings, may find the solution in the sins of his forefathers. But, in proportion as we recognize that weakness and disease are due to moral rather than physical causes shall we approach the cure; only we must begin with practices of a much higher sort than cold baths and the hardening of our children in accordance with the theories of Rousseau and other reformers. Physicians, who are often charged with being too materialistic, may meet the reproach by taking a hint from the moralist and the priest. The true physician will see the road to salvation as clearly as they.

There are human beings so happily endowed by nature that their moral development proceeds with great ease; they may be said to possess moral genius, just as we speak of genius in



art. Such exceptional beings were Marcus Aurelius, Socrates, Howard, and Penn. In individuals possessing this endowment the harmony of their existence will unmistakably manifest itself, even where, as in the case of Socrates, the struggle of the mind with the imperfections of the body is apparent. The scattered rays of an inner light, illumining, as it were, the body, are all the more glorious to behold. The saying of Apollonius, "There are blossoms even in wrinkles," is as true to-day as of yore.

Modern psychologists, says Feuchtersleben, reproach those of a former day with having split up and destroyed, as it were, the unity of the human mind by ascribing to it a number of greater and lesser functions, such as reason, intellect, higher and lower desires, imagination, memory, etc. In so far as these so-called functions were represented as agencies acting according to special laws, the criticism is well-founded; for the human intellect is a complete and indivisible whole, and its apparent parts are but the various forms of its activity. These forms, however, are clearly distinct from each other, and may well be considered each by itself.

The sum and substance of all our activities is revealed in but three ways: we are able to think, to feel, and to will. This makes up the whole of man, the essence of his nature and his aims. In philosophic language, it comprises "the totality of his reasoning, imagining, and striving." Thoughts are, as it were, the food, emotions the atmosphere, and the acts of the will the propelling force of our intellectual life.

Assuming that there is a progressive order in the realm of the mind, we shall assign the lowest rank to the imagination and the highest to reason, the will occupying a place between the two. Such at least is the order in which the functions of the mind are developed during life. The child lets his imagination run riot, youth has the expanding and fructifying force of the intellectual organism and connects its various parts with one another. Without this regulating force our ideas would become stagnant, our conceptions would remain rigid and lifeless, our sensations coarse and sensual.

Kant has said that the propelling power of imagination is more direct than that of any merely mechanical agency. He remarks that

he who is very fond of social pleasures will eat with far greater appetite than one who has spent two hours on horseback, and cheerful books he believes to be more conducive to health than physical exercise. In this sense he considers dreaming as a sort of exercise in sleep, provided by nature in order to keep the wheels of the human system going.

The power of imagination consists merely in the ability to grasp the non-real, and with this ability are implanted in us the germs of happiness or misery. If the growth of the imagination is unchecked, we walk in day dreams and stand at the threshold of insanity. Yet imagination exercises its slow and continuous influence on all of us. We may say that it dwells within us before we are conscious of our existence, and it almost survives us, as in all those conditions where reflection is overpowered by obscure imaginings. It is most potent in infancy and it is with us in sleep and insanity. As the outer world surrounds us with its unnumbered influences, so imagination fills our inner being with its boundless wealth. Hence how can its activity fail to be decisive for health or illness? "Many

an hour," says Lichtenberg,\* "have I spent in giving full rein to my fancy, and I should never have reached the age I did had I not steeped myself in that bath of imagination at the season when people usually go to watering-places."

Our sentiments are at work while we give scope to our imagination, and here lies the opportunity of the observant physician. We have all heard stories of the miraculous curative power of the imagination in disease, and we are only too familiar with the part imagination plays in bringing on disease or aggravating it where it exists; may we not then assume that what can cause and cure disease, can also prevent it? How great and serious is the suffering of those unfortunate beings who in their fixed imagination surrender themselves to a threatened or existing evil! Sooner or later what they fear overtakes them. The physiological cause of this phenomenon lies in the constant nervous excitation of the organ concerned, with its direct sequels. There is on record the case of a pupil of Boerhave, who went through the most terri-

\* Georg Christoph Lichtenberg (1742-99), a German physicist, critic, and satirist, known for his discoveries in the field of electricity.

ble experiences in the course of his medical studies, because all the morbid conditions which the eloquent teacher so vividly depicted gradually made their appearance in his own body. After having suffered from various fevers and inflammatory diseases during his winter course, and from nervous affections during the summer, he thought it advisable to give up a profession which had brought him to the brink of the grave. The imaginary cases of hydrophobia and cholera, at a time when the popular mind is filled with anxiety on these subjects, are further illustrations of the same phenomenon. While studying ophthalmology, says Feuchtersleben, the future oculist sometimes sees *mouches volantes* (floating black specks) before his eyes, which may thereby become actually weakened, and his imagination may even conjure up the spectre of a cataract.

If we turn to the comforting consideration of the many cases where an actual cure is brought about by a purely imaginary agency—have we not all heard of bread pills and their marvellous effect?—we must ask ourselves, Is the cure less real because due to imagination? Feuchters-

leben cites an amusing case in point. An English physician, who had been vainly treating a man suffering from temporary paralysis of the tongue, thought he would try in his case an instrument, invented by himself, on whose efficacy he built high hopes. In order to ascertain first the temperature of the tongue, he inserted under it a small pocket thermometer. The patient, believing that this was the new instrument which was to cure him, assured the doctor after a few minutes, with every manifestation of delight, that he could now move his tongue, and proceeded to do so. Was he, asks Feuchtersleben, less able to move the tongue because it was only his imagination that had cured him?

The candid observer of his own self must admit that he is most strongly influenced by the vital energy of a single individual, which leaves its stamp upon him. The courage of the hero reanimates like a divine breath his terror-stricken comrades, after trembling fear has spread its contagion. The hearty laugh, the merry mood, irresistibly infect the assembled company, and even the surly misanthrope, fight against it as he may, cannot wholly suppress the

smile that steals over his lips. Again, the yawn of a single bored individual creates an epidemic of yawns. What one person in a crowd professes to have seen, all see, and thus it is possible for a number of sane and truthful persons to testify that they have seen the ghost which a medium has conjured up. In an evil sense, as well as for every good purpose, it may be said that faith is all-powerful, and that the age of miracles is not yet past. Think well of your fellowman, and you will find him worthy of your trust; confide in him who is half honest, and he will become wholly so; give your pupil credit for ability, and he will manifest it; consider him incapable of progress, and he will remain so. Believe that you are healthy, and you may become sound. All nature is but an echo of the spirit, and the highest law which she discloses to us is that the ideal may become the real, and that ideas gradually conquer the world.

Imagination, we see, is thus the propelling force in the realm of thought, and it behooves the wise physician to avail himself of this fact in all those cases where the innate stock of imagination is too slender to enable the patient

to follow out, of his own initiative, the plans essential for the hygiene of the soul. In other words, the physician will stimulate the feeble will of his patient by imposing upon it his own. "Soulsick," says Hippel,\* "is everyone whose imagination is weak." Hufeland was right in considering an imagination busy with lovely things among the most important means of prolonging life. "Kalobiotik" (the art of making life beautiful) is thus a part of his famous "Makrobiotik" (the art of prolonging life). Imagination alone can render life beautiful. The sad catastrophes which wrecked gifted writers like Novalis† and Kleist‡ could not have occurred if their imagination had not taken a wrong direction, and led to the paralysis of all capacity for enjoyment. The power of the imagination, as it may be the most beneficial, can also become the most dangerous element of our emotional nature. It is a gentle Vestal flame which, if guarded in its virgin purity,

\*Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel (1741-96), a German satirist.

†"Novalis," the assumed name of Friedrich von Hardenberg (1772-1801), a writer of the romantic school, whose troubled life came to an early close.

‡Heinrich von Kleist (1777-1811), the dramatist, who killed himself and the woman he loved.



gives light and life, but which, freed from restraint, leaves desolation in its path.

It has been vouchsafed to man to nourish as well as subdue the fire of imagination within him by that glorious ingredient of human culture—wit and humor. How wholesome is the power of wit in ridiculing vanity, pedantry, irresolution, and dejection! It dispels gnawing care, disarms puffed-up pride, and chases away torturing delusion. The momentary cheerfulness to which even the gloomiest mind yields while under the spell of pleasant diversion is of priceless value in cases where no other distraction is of avail. And as the treasures of literature offer their cheering balm, so the entire field of art holds out its sweet consolation. As in our dreams the fatiguing struggle between the intellect and the world of reality gives way to a state of gentle passiveness which replenishes the powers of body and soul, so art creates waking dreams which sustain our dual nature under its most staggering burdens. Music, the creative arts, and persuasive speech appeal to the body as they do to the mind. Of music in particular a keen observer has said that its most important

effect is to promote health. For health consists in the full control of all bodily and mental functions, and song and music reanimate our organs, and cause the entire nervous system to vibrate in harmonious accord. Thus every form of art rests on the sense of harmonious relations, and all the arts may become the very basis of health and cheerfulness, if, dominated and guided by the intellect, they lead us to peace and contentment. But it is only art in its ennobling forms that can fulfil these functions. The question whether the works of our modern painters and sculptors can inspire us as do the treasures of antiquity, and whether our poets can cheer us as the immortal ones do, has a far greater bearing on the hygiene of the soul than is commonly supposed.

In speaking of the will as the motive power of the imagination, Feuchtersleben has in mind not the determination to attain one's desire, whether of a higher or a lower kind, but that assertion of individual energy which is the crowning faculty of the soul and, in the last analysis, expresses character. Toward the strengthening of will power the moralist, law-

giver and teacher, as well as the physician, must direct their efforts if reason is to exercise that sway on which moral and physical health depends. The task of the physician is often almost completed if he succeeds in arousing the will of his patient. It is idle to attempt to reason with the insane, to try to show him that his delusion is a phantom, but he can be cured if we succeed in stimulating his activity, in getting him to the point of exercising his will power. And how much more certain will be the result in the case of one who is merely feeble in body and soul, and learns that there is a remedy within him which he can apply as soon as he wills.

The conditions of modern society are often such as to militate against the free exercise of the will, and we are only too prone to excuse our lack of resolution on the score of absent-mindedness, inability to come to a decision, momentary distraction—ominous names all of these, says Feuchtersleben, and fatal to the hygiene of the soul. Nothing leads so easily to final paralysis of will power as the habit of indecision. Even physical collapse may be its

ultimate consequence. He relates a striking case in point, on the authority of Marcus Herz, a Berlin physician, famous in the last decades of the eighteenth century. The doctor was treating the writer Moritz,\* who was to all appearances in the last stages of a consuming fever. The hope which he felt bound to hold out to his patient seemed but to aggravate his condition. He met the physician's statements with expressions of utter despondency, and the struggle between hope and fear sapped the sufferer's last strength. Herz, knowing the character of his patient, decided upon a desperate step. He told him that all hope was indeed gone. The intense excitement into which the sufferer was thrown by this announcement was followed by listless apathy. In the evening the pulse had improved, and a quieter night followed. The fever diminished day by day, and within three weeks the patient was well.

Absentmindedness or want of concentration, so closely related to lack of will power, may be said to correspond to that physical condition

\* K. P. Moritz (1756-93), a writer on æsthetics, prominent in the "storm and stress" period of German literature.

known as trembling of the muscles. It is a state of psychical oscillation expressive of the inability of the spirit to pursue a certain aim, and of a desire for constant relaxation and change. And just as bodily weakness finally yields to vigorous impulse, so the will works wonders in overcoming the trembling of the soul. Feuchtersleben found in his own person that a nervous condition in which the printed letters seemed to dance before his eyes disappeared as soon as he fastened his gaze steadily upon the apparently trembling objects. Exactly so can the will overcome the oscillations of the soul. To diversion he opposes concentration. He condemns the popular expedient of resorting to distracting pastimes as a panacea for physical and mental ailments. The contrary, that is to say, the fixing of the will upon a certain activity proceeding from within, is the proper remedy in such cases. Feuchtersleben is here in close accord with Pascal, who says:

“The only thing which makes us forget our miseries is distraction, yet this in reality is the greatest of all miseries; for it is precisely distraction that keeps us from thinking seriously

about ourselves and insensibly destroys us. Without it we should become weary, and weariness would force us to seek a better way out of our troubles. Distraction merely beguiles us and gradually leads to death."

Grillparzer, who in his own person learned to know the torments of indecision, has in a striking passage given poetic utterance to Feuchtersleben's remarks as to the value of concentration:

"Concentered thought? Spoke thus mere accident?  
Or didn't thou fully grasp its meaning, child?  
The word thou utter'st balm is to my ear,  
For thou has named the world's prodigious lever,  
Which raises what is great a thousand fold,  
And moves the smallest closer to the stars.  
The hero's deed, the poet's holy song,  
The seer's vision, and the hand of God,  
Attention rapt conceives or comprehends.  
Distraction idly mocks what ne'er it grasps."

"Lack of initiative," "poor spirits," "ill-humor," or by whatever name society may dignify insufficient self-control—all are reprehensible alike in the eyes of the philosopher and the physician. Lavater wrote on the moral aspects of ill-humor, Feuchtersleben condemns it from a purely medical point of view. Sad-

ness, he says, is a condition which no one can always successfully contend, but moroseness is quite a different thing. There may be a certain poetic element in sadness, but moodiness and moroseness lack every element of attraction. They and all their kin have their root in habitual indolence, and the remedy lies in a continuous and wise activity—serious in the hours of work, diverting in leisure moments. Were we not in the habit of passing the finest morning hours in bed, we should never know that depressing consciousness of being late with which we so often begin the day. Had we from early childhood accustomed ourselves to a pleasant orderliness, our inner being would have acquired a harmony in consonance with our outward actions. If every moment were used in accordance with the fitness of things, there would be no time for being “out of sorts.”\* It is true we cannot always be in the right humor for everything, but we can always be in the right humor for some things. A wise recognition of the value

\*“The calm or disturbance of our mind does not depend so much on what we regard as the more important things of life as on a judicious or injudicious arrangement of the little things of daily occurrence.”—La Rochefoucauld: *Maxims*.

of change of occupation does wonders in keeping off the "vapors." Withdrawal from the world engenders moroseness and, according to Plato, promotes obstinacy. But so does constant living with and in the world; therefore let us learn to live both with and without the world, and we shall find in suitable change health and good spirits.

All the various conditions due to ill-regulated nerves may be overcome by will power, just as certain morbid conditions may be brought on by the absence of that power. In the human organism slumber unsuspected forces, which may be awakened by the firm will. The stoicism of the ancients—the purest, loftiest, and most practical of all pre-Christian doctrines—has proved to the world what may be accomplished by will power. Let no one imagine that the disciples of the stoic schools were steeled by cold syllogisms; it was the power of the will that wrought their miracles of endurance.

There is perhaps no more remarkable phenomenon in the development of man's nature than the influence of abstract thought on his concrete organism through that connecting link



which may be termed "intellectual emotion." In the existence of such emotion, side by side with the ethico-religious sentiment, lies the root of all humanitarianism. Individuals of a lower order do not think in connection with what they feel; persons in whom the intellect unduly predominates think without reference to emotion; only those who have attained a high degree of both intellectual and moral culture think and feel as man ought to. But everything depends on what we mean by "culture." The sickly scholar and the robust ignorant peasant represent alike human types in the composition of which important elements of culture are wanting, even though the scholar may have neglected his body because of his deep interest in mathematical problems, and the peasant may know enough to be a good citizen. True culture consists in the harmonious development of all our faculties, and in it alone lie health, happiness, and wisdom.

The principal reason for a chronic, ill-defined state of invalidism must often be sought in an exaggerated attention to the concerns of the body, and no surer way of counteracting this

evil can be found than by turning the attention toward higher intellectual and spiritual aims. Nothing is more pitiful than to observe a petty mind eternally busy with the care of its material welfare, which this very care is undermining day by day. Patients recruited from this class, who are despised by their own physicians, die from sheer longing to live. And why? Because they lack spiritual and intellectual culture, which alone could have given them mastery over their miserable physical state.

Greater even than those wonderful disciples of stoicism who owe their spiritual triumphs to force of will, are those lofty and serene minds the range of whose interests embraces every form of sane enjoyment open to man. Of such was preëminently Goethe. Spinoza, often considered the most austere of philosophers, said: "It is impossible to overdo gaiety of spirits, for every sort of gaiety is of value; sadness, however, is ever an evil." And he also said: "The more we cultivate our intelligence, the happier we become."

It is interesting to find Schopenhauer turning from the darker aspects of life and coinciding

with Feuchtersleben's view of the philosophic value of serenity. "Nothing," he says, "conduces so directly to happiness as cheerfulness. It is a quality which is its own immediate reward. He who is gay has always a reason for being so, namely, the fact that he is gay. Cheerfulness alone can make up for the loss of every other possession, while nothing can take its place. We may be young, handsome, rich, and high in station; still, in estimating our happiness, the question will be asked: Are we cheerful with it all? But if we see a person who is cheerful, no matter whether he be young, or old, straight of limb or deformed, poor or rich, he is happy. Therefore let us open wide the door to cheerfulness whenever it knocks. It can never come amiss. Instead of thinking thus, however, we often hesitate whether to admit it at all, and begin to reflect whether we really have every cause for contentment, or fear that gaiety will disturb our serious thoughts and anxious problems. But what good these will do is very uncertain, while cheerfulness is a direct gain."

If thus mere thoughtless gaiety, the uncon-

scious expression of a natural elasticity of spirits, can become a salutary and sustaining force, how much more powerful will be the stimulus of the conscious feeling that we have made the most of our endowments and opportunities and live our lives sanely, as complete parts of a harmonious whole.

If we observe the hypochondriac closely and with an unprejudiced eye, we shall find that his condition consists at bottom of a dull, sad egotism. He lives, thinks and suffers only for his pitiful little self. He turns away from everything that is beautiful in nature and man and—what is worse—from the sufferings of his fellow-men, and so far from taking that philosophical view to which nothing human is foreign, becomes a stranger to everything human. If it be important to act upon such a mind before it sinks into final darkness, how much more important is it to counteract in time that tendency toward gloomy dissatisfaction which lurks in so many of us. Self-control, which is nothing else than a wise moderation, is the lever which lifts the mind into willing obedience to law—the source of all real contentment.

Nothing conduces to inward serenity so much as the contemplation of the eternal works of nature. The Brahmin, oblivious of his self in his devotion to the problems of the universe, passes his days in frugal contentment, and attains a span of life vouchsafed to few of his restless fellow men in other parts of the world. Kant, to whom nature had given a frail body, wrested from her permanent health by thinking great thoughts. Wieland,\* than whom few have lived a more harmonious life, has shown that the vivid imagination of the poet may accompany the uniform development of all the other intellectual powers, and lead to the happiest and healthiest old age. Nothing is more salutary than to regard those luminous minds that triumphed over advancing years. Plato studied and taught till nearly eighty; Sophocles wrote his *Oedipus at Colonus* when still older; Cato retained his active interest in public affairs till his death, at eighty-five; Isocrates composed brilliant orations at the age of ninety-

\* Christoph Martin Wieland (1733-1813), one of the most prominent writers of the classic period of German literature, the friend of Goethe and Herder, chiefly known for his romantic epic *Oberon*.

three; Fleury, at ninety, still guided the destinies of France, and Goethe's vision ranged undimmed over the universe until death closed his eyes in his eighty-third year.

Let us not rashly assume that the spirit of the modern age is opposed to the harmonious development of body and mind, that diminished physical power is a necessary concomitant of the universal spread of intelligence. Cultivation of the intellect alone, it is true, is not culture; but where judicious reading, stimulating conversation, independent thinking, and the free play of the imagination, are joined to a firm will, the result is to-day, as of yore, sound physical health. Truly cultured, that is to say, sagacious and clear-minded persons, are far less prone to complaining about physical ailments and mental depression than those whose horizon includes nothing more prominent than their bodily concerns. With Brigham,\* Feuchtersleben believes that the progress of that civilization in which

\* Amariah Brigham (1798-1849), an American physician, whose treatises on insanity and diseases of the brain were authoritative in their day. He wrote: *Influence of Mental Cultivation on the Health*, and *Influence of Religion upon the Health and Physical Welfare of Mankind*.

the cultivation of the arts goes hand in hand with moral and intellectual enlightenment, and in which rational diversions occupy as important a place as sane temperance measures, is certain to lead to decreased mortality and heightened physical welfare.

It is our duty to inform our intellect if we would learn to subdue our passions. The more closely we conform to truth, the freer we are to act, and activity means health. He who cannot master his passions and emotions spends his life in servitude. Tears and sighs are evidences of a weak soul and obstacles in the pursuit of virtue and health. The mind insensibly conforms to such mechanical expressions of inner feebleness. Hence the importance of establishing physical habits to aid in the regeneration of faulty mental traits—experiments that are within the power of everyone. Let those prone to act with precipitation accustom themselves to walk and write slowly. The irresolute should try to work rapidly; those who walk about sad-eyed and with bowed head, lost in fanciful day dreams, should be taught to walk erect, look others straight in the face, and to speak in a loud and

distinct voice. If we attune our minds to joy we shall do nature's bidding. She has implanted in every organic being the conditions of self-preservation. He who has retained his individual freedom will not waste time in thinking of death. Wisdom lies not in the contemplation of death, but in that of life. We shall live a rational life if we keep from us whatever impedes our action and prevents our enjoyment—hatred, envy, anger, pride and arrogance. There is no more effective way of conquering the passions and emotions than by learning to know their causes. All experience shows this. Even grief yields to reason. We mourn those we have loved and lost less when we reflect upon the laws of nature.

Before we arrive at a definite knowledge of the nature of our passions we must establish for ourselves certain principles, and imprint them so firmly on our minds that we may apply them in any emergency that may arise.\* If, for instance, as the result of our reflection that love is the source of universal happiness, we have

\* "When the need of each opinion comes, we ought to have it in readiness," says Epictetus.



adopted the dogma that love can conquer hatred, the wrong done us by some enemy will not easily excite our ire.\* In thus arranging, as it were, our thoughts beforehand, it is, however, essential to keep before us the good inherent in most things, so that we may ever be animated by a certain feeling of pleasure in translating our thoughts into action. If, for instance, we are conscious of a desire for fame, let us think of the good there is in fame, and of how true fame may be attained; but let us not dwell on false glory, its transitoriness, and on whatever is unpleasant in connection with the subject and may give rise to morbid doubt. The ability to acquire habits is the kindest gift of Providence. Through habit are we enabled to assert the vigor of our individuality, while gradually assimilating what at first was foreign to us. To acquire good habits, bred of a joyous submission to the divinity, is the essence of morality, and hence of the hygiene of the soul.

\* "Whenever any man doth trespass against thee, presently consider with thyself what it was that he did suppose to be good, what to be evil, when he did trespass. For this when thou knowest, thou wilt pity him; thou wilt have no occasion either to wonder, or to be angry."—*Meditations of Marcus Aurelius* (Casaubon's translation).

It is easy to trace the influence of the ancients on Feuchtersleben's philosophy. A striking passage from Epictetus makes this influence still clearer. "It is impossible," says he, "for habits and faculties, some of them not to be produced when they did not exist before, and others not to be increased and strengthened by corresponding acts. In this manner certainly, as philosophers say, also diseases of the mind grow up. For when you have once desired money, if reason be applied to lead to a perception of the evil, the desire is stopped, and a ruling faculty of our mind is restored to the original authority. But if you apply no means of cure, it no longer returns to the same state, but being again excited by the corresponding appearance, it is inflamed to desire quicker than before, and when this takes place continually it is henceforth hardened, and the disease of the mind confirms the love of money. For he who has had a fever, and has been released from it, is not in the same state that he was before, unless he has been completely cured. Something of the kind happens also in diseases of the soul. Certain traces and blisters are left in it, and unless a man shall com-

pletely efface them, when he is again lashed on the same places, the lash will produce not blisters, but sores. If then you wish not to be of an angry temper, do not feed the habit; throw nothing on it which will increase it; at first keep quiet, and count the days on which you have not been angry. I used to be in passion; now every second day, then every third, then every fourth. But if you have intermitted thirty days, make a sacrifice to God. For the habit at first begins to be weakened, and then completely destroyed. . . . Every habit and faculty is maintained and increased by the corresponding actions. . . . When you have been angry, you must know that not only has this evil befallen you, but that you have also increased the habit, and in a manner thrown fuel upon fire. . . . Generally, then, if you would make anything a habit, do it; if you would not make it a habit, do not do it; but accustom yourself to do something else in place of it.”\*

Emerson, in his essay on “Compensation,” speaks of the polarity, or action and reaction, in every part of nature, of the dualism that under-

\* George Long’s translation.

lies the condition of man. "Every excess," he says in a famous passage, "causes a defect; every defect an excess. Every sweet hath its sour; every evil its good. Every faculty which is a receiver of pleasure has an equal penalty put on its abuse. It is to answer for its moderation with its life. For every grain of wit there is a grain of folly. For everything you have missed, you have gained something else; and for everything you gain, you lose something."

Feuchtersleben expresses the same thought as follows: "The life of man, as that of all nature, consists of contrasts, which follow, accompany, and condition each other. There is at work in the universe a law of equilibrium according to which these contrasts are equalized as soon as manifested. . . . In the entire realm of nature there exists no advantage without a defect, no profit without a loss, no ascent without a fall, no discord without harmony. Thus, too, in that microcosm, the life of man, there is constant action and reaction: sleeping and waking, joy and sorrow, inspiration and expiration. The stronger the impulse, the more vigorous the onset of the opposite conditioned by it." If the

force or frequency of these contrasts is increased, or if the tendency in any one direction becomes pronounced and permanent, there results a disturbance of that equilibrium without which life cannot exist. It is then all-important to know how to deal with these contrasts. Happy is he who, when old age creeps upon him, can revive youth within his soul, and equally happy he who in the struggle between youth and age, can conserve his remaining strength by undisturbed placidity of temper and emotion. But only he can attain this end who has learned to control himself. It does not suffice to exercise care in the matter of food and drink, to regulate the hours of work and rest, to know by heart Hufeland's *Art of Prolonging Life*; it is necessary to force one's self to acquire moral and intellectual strength, in order to learn the meaning of true health. And the art of self-control is beyond no one.

Without pain there would be no pleasure, just as there would be no day without night. Nature has consciously added the thorn to the rose. He who would free us from all sorrow would also deprive us of all pleasure; care-free persons, whose every wish is gratified, and who are not

spurred on to an active life, easily become hypochondriacs. Only fools will envy those who, while draining every source of pleasure, feel in the depth of their hearts that there is somehow a gap in their lives which no enjoyment can fill. The wise man will not invite this torturing sentiment, but will welcome the shadows which cross the path of every pilgrim on earth. He will find contentment in that subdued twilight which is alike removed from the glaring day of happiness and the dark night of misery. The longing for a better and more perfect world, so natural to the human breast, is of value only as long as it remains a vague dream. Longings and aspirations are given to man in order to lift his thoughts to a higher sphere, but not to bring that realm down to earthly cognizance. It is our duty not to abandon ourselves to religious yearnings; abuse of devotional sentiment ends in dissatisfaction with the world in which we live. It is a wise institution to have but one Sunday a week. The desire for perfectibility is far more likely to be gratified by one who in resigned contentment takes the world as it is than by him who constantly longs for a more perfect

one. Let us not ransack heaven and earth for sources of enjoyment. Permanent satisfaction can be secured only in one way: by devotion to duty and by work. And man's activity is entirely compatible with, nay, is conditioned on, an inner restful serenity, and to this, if we choose, we may all surrender ourselves. A state of half voluntary, half unconscious contentment is that which is most conducive to health. When we are both busy and cheerful, attentive to the world and in accord with it, we are not likely to fall into fitful moods. Such a state of contentment represents the ripest result of culture.

Hypochondria, the opposite of this serenity of the soul, is the saddest and most senseless of all human afflictions. Reason, morality, religion, satire, have in vain exhausted their armories in attacking it; it survives, unmoved even by the reproach that it is in reality the result of sheer selfishness. It has become fashionable to look upon egotism as proof of a superior intellect. Perhaps the best way of dealing with hypochondria is to show that it is a phantom of the imagination, a mere nothing.

There is, it is true, a form of hypochondria

which can be treated only by the physician, but what is commonly understood by that term is a purely imaginary evil, and deserves a harsher name. There would seem to be no need of conjuring up imaginary ailments, since there are enough real ones. All of us are only relatively well. Every one, if he chooses, and has eyes to see, may discover the road that will lead him to his grave, and if he looks about him, with eyes dimmed by an obscure half-knowledge of the world, he will discover the road all the more readily—and follow it at an accelerated pace. As long as we are well enough to do each day what the day calls for, and can enjoy our rest after the day's work is done, it is our duty—alike from the standpoint of the citizen and that of the physician—to pay no attention to our bodily condition. Pain is an arrogant nothing which becomes something only when we acknowledge its existence. We ought to be ashamed to fondle and nourish it until it overmasters us. It becomes great only because we are small. Who can think of a Themistocles or a Regulus looking at his tongue in a mirror or feeling his pulse! Let us invoke the root of the



evil, that it may cure what it causes. Does not the hypochondriac die daily from fear of death? Nothing is more pathetically ludicrous than to see these petty unfortunates who ransack medical books in order to copy prescriptions and rules for the preservation of health. To one of these Dr. Herz once said: "My dear fellow, you will some day die of a misprint." Such hypochondriacs are the human failures whom Plato would banish from the state. They are as old as civilization.

Kant explained away as a mere nothing the hypochondria which threatened to assail his own clearness of intellect, and pronounced those as lacking in sense who believed in the reality of such an evil. "If anyone," he says, "becomes a prey to gloomy moods, let him ask himself whether there is any cause for them. If he finds no cause, or recognizes that, while there exists a reason for his anxieties, nothing can be done to remove the effect, he will quietly content himself with this expression of his inner feeling, let his anxieties stay where they are, as though they did not concern him in the least, and go about the business which claims his attention."

A sound resolve, in truth, says Feuchtersleben, and one which worked well, for by brushing aside the nothing—which in his case really meant a narrow chest that did not afford sufficient space to his lungs—the sage of Königsberg managed to attain a respectable old age.\* The philosopher Lichtenberg thought of his own whimsies and moods very much as Kant did. “There are,” he says, “serious illnesses of which one can die, and there are others of which one does not die, but which one can recognize and feel without much effort, and finally there are

\* Kant’s own words are: “Owing to my flat and narrow chest, which did not afford sufficient scope to the movements of the heart and lungs, I had a natural inclination toward hypochondria, which in earlier years bordered on disgust with life. But by reflecting that the causes of this difficulty in breathing were perhaps merely mechanical, and therefore irremediable, I succeeded in ignoring it completely. Thus, while my chest felt oppressed, there was peace and serenity in my head, and this state of my mind expressed itself when I was with others quite naturally and intentionally, and not (as in the case of hypochondriacs) according to varying moods. And since one enjoys life more by *doing*, to the full extent of one’s opportunities, than by giving one’s self up to pleasure, mental activity, which engenders a sort of heightened consciousness of life, can overcome obstacles that concern the body alone. The oppression of the chest has remained with me, for its cause lies in my bodily constitution; but I have conquered its influence on my thoughts and actions, by turning my attention away from my physical sensations, as though they did not concern me in the least.”—*Von der Macht des Gemüths*, etc.

those which one cannot see without a microscope. But seen through the microscope they look horrible. The name of that microscope is hypochondria."

A hypochondriacal delusion very common in former days was the belief of delicate persons that they were doomed to die of consumption—a belief fostered by sentimental novels, with their hectic heroes and heroines. More than a century ago the German physician Weikard spoke of a certain species of mental aberration as "imaginary consumption." Hippel suggested as a remedy for the imaginary ailments of the hypochondriac inoculation with a real disease. "Let the patient get sick, so that he may know what sickness is, and he will get well." In whatever light we may consider the wretched plight of the hypochondriac, says Feuchtersleben—whether we call it weakness, delusion, laziness, stupidity, selfishness, disease, or incipient insanity—activity is the only cure for it, and it is a cure that ought to be recommended with very little ceremony. Those whose ailments are purely imaginary neither excite nor deserve pity, and there is no reason why they should not

be plainly told that they are intolerable and unfit for human society. Heroic treatment like this may sometimes end the matter much more quickly than all fine-spun philosophical arguments. We have the moral right to plague those that plague us, and we are, moreover, rude only for the good of the patient.

Besides selfishness and indolence, habits of pedantry are among the chief causes of hypochondria. Such habits are often misinterpreted, being overlooked where they may be found in full flower, or wrongly attributed to individuals who are quite free from them. Pedantry in this sense does not consist in exaggerated devotion to minute matters of orderliness and punctuality, but in that littleness of mind which loses sight of the end while reaching out for the means, and makes of us slaves to self-created or conventional idols. The true pedant is not the secluded scholar who shuns society because he prefers to it the companionship of his books, but he who prizes the conventionalities of literature more than the world of thought, of which the book is merely the symbol. Such a pedant is he to whom a particular edition of Aristotle is of

greater importance than his teachings, and who venerates not the spirit of antiquity, but the mere records of the past because it is the past. The most absurd of all the varieties of the pedant is he who least of all dreams that he can be reckoned among such—the drawing-room fop, whose life-breath is fashion and all the petty formalities which, from having been the means of facilitating agreeable social intercourse, have been elevated by ignorant custom into the chief aim and end of existence. To such an one the trifles of life have become the reality and realities mere trifles.

Let us turn to the melancholy of great men, which has so often been commented upon. Aristotle's observation that "men of profound and noble mind are generally inclined to sadness" has been taken as an axiom. We think of Camoëns, Tasso, Young, and Byron as wrapt in gloom. The hypochondria of Camoëns and Tasso has been used as the subject of dramatists, and we are moved by their sufferings, as we are by the sorrows of Young and Byron. But all this has no bearing on the everyday world about us. Let great men express and explain, as best they

may, the nature of their feelings; but let us not mistake the moroseness and mawkishness of the modern writer for evidence of genius.

The hypochondriac, no matter what his mental endowments, is always an egotist. Poets, accustomed to analyze their feelings and to look upon themselves as exceptional beings, are particularly liable to distorted views of life. Cultivate sympathy with the world, says Feuchtersleben, study history, and you will cease to magnify your petty vexations.

There are but two real sources of enjoyment—the cultivation of the mind and the study of nature. The two go hand in hand, for the beauty and grandeur of nature cannot unfold themselves to our senses without elevating and broadening the mind. After saying all that can be said in praise of the society of our fellow-men—and we cannot forget that it teaches us the greatest lesson we can learn, namely, to do our duty—it remains true that only in the companionship of nature can we find true happiness. Of all classes of scholars, naturalists live longest and enjoy the happiest old age. Just as genuine love of nature, in order to be truly fruitful, requires of us a

childlike disposition, so, in turn, fondness for nature begets in her devotees a peculiar child-like simplicity, and restores to them their youth. Every intellectual effort is, in the last analysis, an inquiry into the laws of nature; and we retain mental health and happiness only by thinking and acting in accordance with these laws, thus bringing our inner life into harmony with the harmony of all nature. Even the savage instinctively recognizes the truth of this, for nature has implanted in his breast a sense of her beauty, just as she has implanted it in the heart of every child. Beyond this even a Newton cannot go, as he contemplates the wonders of the universe, and only in this way do all created beings answer the purpose of nature—that they learn to know their place and find satisfaction in filling it. Every one of us is like Antæus, receiving strength from loving contact with Mother Earth. Nature recognizes and reinforces whatever individual capacity we possess; she excites no passions, but rather counteracts them and makes apparent their futility. She educates us gently, but surely and ceaselessly.

Communion with nature develops all the pow-

ers within us. She addresses herself to every part of our organic being, filling our imagination with lofty images, and restraining the will, while giving it iron firmness. Her vast silence instructs us; the grand but simple workings of her eternal laws awaken in us fruitful thought, the unvarying course of her events establishes our mental equilibrium; the beauties which she scatters in endless profusion across our path, in lovely blossoms as in the starry skies, dispel our petty cares and selfish anxieties; her greatness lifts us above our own self, until all our feelings, thoughts and desires, merge in the contemplation of the universe, which in turn leads us gently to religion—the highest sentiment of which man is capable. But while all moral and intellectual efforts tend to fit into the universal plan, we must keep in mind that the individual is called upon to cultivate his own narrow field, and to bestow on it the same care which the husbandman gives to his little farm; for each of us can do no more than perform the part assigned to him.

In summing up the lessons which his *Hygiene of the Soul* endeavors to inculcate, Feuchtersleben lays stress on the necessity, for purely prac-



tical reasons, of starting with the belief that the mind possesses the power to influence the body. "I shall leave it to theorists," he says, "to explain the mystery of this influence; I am only concerned with the practical task of proving its possibility by actual facts." A firm belief in the power of the mind over the body is, however, not the only prerequisite of mental and physical health. We must acquire the art of looking at ourselves objectively. He who constantly watches his bodily conditions turns into a self-tormentor and may end in madness, while he who goes his way heedless of himself will never acquire self-control. Yet let us not take our task too seriously. A cheerful glance at ourselves is all that is necessary, for a species of sane self-irony is the sum and substance of the true philosophy of life. Let us strengthen our will, learn to concentrate our attention, cultivate our æsthetic sense, "pray for a pure heart and great thought," and study nature—thus shall we enjoy peace of mind, which means happiness.

## FEUCHTERSLEBEN'S APHORISMS

NEXT to the *Diätetik*, none of the writings of Feuchtersleben appeal to so wide a public as his maxims and aphorisms, which may be found scattered through his collected works under such headings as: "Leaves from the Diary of a Lonely Man," "Concerning Knowledge," "Art," and "Life." Feuchtersleben, like Grillparzer, was in the habit of confiding to his diary, without thought of publication, much of what he wrote on the multitude of subjects which claimed his attention. The specimens here selected cannot convey an adequate idea of the wide range of his intellectual interests, though they sufficiently illustrate the humane and philosophic spirit which animates whatever he wrote.

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It is a useful occupation to look in great writers for a treatment of those problems that are not strictly within their province, such as, for instance, questions of natural science in the writings of poets. We often find that he who is at home in any department of knowledge accepts only what is handed down by other authorities,

while the amateur looks upon the matter in an entirely new light. Thus I found in Kant's minor writings—which, by the way, are of inestimable value—hints which are of the greatest interest to the physician.

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To read books in foreign languages has this good result: it emancipates us from the tyranny of empty phrases, and forces us to stop and think when we come across a word which we do not understand. We Germans feel happy when what we read sounds like tinkling bells.

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Let no one say: This is a book after my own heart, it expresses just what I should have said. One ought never to read in order to be confirmed in one's pet views. Books ought to lead us on, limit our horizon, or enlarge it, and correct and instruct us.

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The elements of natural history ought to be taught to children; art, that is to say the beautiful, to youths; with philosophy—abstract truth—let the mature grapple as best they can; while the old may have their say about history.

The cry of the day is ever for the new. We want to be surprised, amused, and helped to kill time. This is the extent of our interest in art and literature. Yet how much more profitable is it to become thoroughly acquainted with one single noble character, one solitary great intellect.

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What is called "flattery" is for the right-minded generally humiliating, for when we are flattered we secretly have the feeling that what we are credited with is the opposite of the qualities we possess. Why be flattered at being thought capable of doing what we know we cannot perform?

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We can acquire and learn everything, except delicacy of feeling.

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We all have reason, and yet how few of us are reasonable. "Public opinion!" We are sufficiently plagued by the opinions of single individuals. What must be an opinion made up of such units! And yet what should we call that instinct which gradually recognizes what is gen-

uine, and rejects and consigns to oblivion what is worthless?

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Happy is he to whom life becomes a poem, but woe to him who substitutes poetry for life.

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What do we most admire in the Athenians? That they recognized the greatness of Aristophanes side by side with that of Socrates.

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Refinement and good manners cannot be too highly appreciated, for they are the outward form of the intrinsically good and beautiful, and even imitation cannot fail gradually to awaken in us a desire to be in reality what we merely seem to be. Like honor itself, prevailing custom is a lever which lifts us in the direction of virtue. Decorum, like virtue, consists in self-control; it improves him who practises it, for he soon perceives that there is no better way of appearing refined than by being so.

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It is unjust to condemn the use of foreign words in cases where one's own language proves inadequate. The educated writer will sacrifice

a narrow grammatical patriotism to the demands of higher culture. As into a vast sea of fluid thought, which surrounds and unites all countries, he will delve into the linguistic treasures of all and appropriate what he needs in order to create definite images. Rich sources of knowledge and rare opportunities for the broadening of human ties will thus be open to him.

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What I teach and confess to is not optimism (as has been asserted somewhere), for I insist that the dark side of things must not be ignored; not quietism, for I lay stress on constant activity in the search for what is right, and in the doing of it; not scepticism, for the assertion that there are two sides to all things, and that there is some truth in each, does not mean that everything is either true or false; not objectivism, for I would not deprive the individual of an iota of his rights; least of all indifferentism, for my conception of life presupposes an active interest in every form of human thought and endeavor, be it knowledge, art, or the ordinary concerns of life, in all of which there is room for an endless variety of opinions and deeds.

Mathematicians and musicians often display a certain intellectual narrowness, while jurists manifest great keenness and vivacity of mind. Mathematicians and musicians, up to a certain point, exhibit but the workings of a mechanism which deals, in a prescribed fashion, with objects that can be perceived by the senses; it is only when they reach out into a higher sphere, attained by the few who attempt to find the laws of this mechanism, that the higher intellect is called into play. The jurist, on the other hand, deals with laws that have to take cognizance of constantly changing circumstances. All problems of life may be regarded in the light of cases at law and treated as such. Indeed, what is practical philosophy but jurisprudence as applied to God and man?

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We find it much easier to think of the immortality of the soul in connection with a soldier who has fallen in battle than with a man who has been devoured by a bear. Why? Because we think only in an anthropomorphic way.

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Literary clubs never promote anything but

mediocrity. Small talents come there to the surface and produce a momentary impression simply because they are parts of a whole.

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Gifted young men must not be much lectured to or contradicted, else there is danger of provoking in them a secret pride which may become all the more arrogant because secret. In fact, an enforced humility is ever both cause and symptom of an inner conceit.

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Only he impresses me permanently, and has my fullest confidence, who is capable of smiling at his own limitations.

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It is immoral and leads to ruin, to coddle one's feelings, even those that are moral.

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Genius needs and deserves no praise. It is not the result of its own efforts. But industry and moral worth deserve recognition and glory. Such will be the rule when mankind shall have attained a higher state of perfection. Then the world will enjoy its Homers, and it will erect monuments to its Aristideses.



Benefactions, alms, a kindly and charitable behavior, are but poor substitutes for true morality. Indeed, there are many men who buy, as it were, their exemption from the higher obligations of honesty and the practice of real virtue by a show of these practices. They pass in life and in society for good people, but the Almighty reads their hearts. Truly good deeds are those that render doing good unnecessary.

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Both the panegyrists and the detractors of so-called simple common sense ought to take pains to distinguish between sound sense and common sense. Sound sense never refuses to recognize that there are higher things, while common sense, in its narrow selfishness, often denies the existence of anything better than itself.

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Nothing is morally so ineffective as undue moralizing; indeed, nothing is more certain to produce the contrary of what is intended. If, for instance, we depict the misfortune of being rich so graphically as to provoke a smile on the part of the rich man present, other listeners will

refuse to believe even what is true in our story. This ought to be particularly impressed upon writers who undertake to paint the tortures of an evil conscience in too glaring colors. They overlook the fact that there must be a highly developed conscience before its voice can be heard. Only he who is good is troubled in conscience by his lapses, not the common evil-doer. The mediocre man, who is neither good nor bad, consoles himself in listening to some writer's harrowing story, with the reflection: "Thank Heaven, I am spared such tortures!"—and becomes more than ever confirmed in his mediocrity.

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It is a common thing to say that one may compel respect, but not love. Precisely the contrary is true. It is possible to call forth love by a charm of manner which tells on every one; respect, on the other hand, is rendered only by the few who are themselves worthy of it. It is a sentiment which presupposes a far higher degree of ethical development than is found in the average man. You may be ever so deserving of respect, yet you will never compel the masses

to render you a tribute which is foreign and burdensome to their feelings.

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Conscience is but good taste in ethical matters. We are more disgusted by what is vulgar than by crime itself. But, again, good taste may be defined as conscience in æsthetic matters.

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Whoever enters upon public office ought to pledge himself to continue for at least one year rigidly in the ways of his predecessor. Thorough reforms can be introduced only by one who knows from personal experience what needs reforming, and progress will then be possible without provoking reaction. There is a moral value in established forms which those familiar with the ways of the world know how to appreciate.

## FEUCHTERSLEBEN'S INFLUENCE

FEUCHTERSLEBEN'S *Diätetik* has, in a singular degree, won alike popular success and the encomiums of physicians. Dr. Max Neuburger, professor of the history of medicine at the University of Vienna, speaks of it as a work "popular in the best sense of the word but far removed from the ordinary run of books which deal with medical matters in a popular way, and merely breed dilettanteism and hypochondria, while undermining faith in medicine itself, to the detriment of the patient." "This little book," he continues, "is among the most beautiful and valuable possessions of German literature. It is wholly superfluous to speak of its contents, for who does not know this song of songs of the power of the will? The mere mention of its title awakens in most of us recollections of our youth, of our hours of irresoluteness, weariness, despondency and, again, of self-conquest, of awakening confidence and renewed joy of life. What makes this book permanently great is that, reflecting as it does Feuchtersleben's own life, it takes hold of our inmost being, so that, in read-

ing it, we seem to live over the author's experiences. . . . We rise from its pages with a feeling of renewed strength; indeed, a single one of his aphorisms outweighs volumes of discourses on moral treatment."

Feuchtersleben's success would not have been as real as it was had he lacked a sense of humor—that delicate gift without which moral writings rarely pass into literature. In a treatise republished in 1849 under the title of *Physicians and the Public*, there are some passages that recall our own philosopher-physician Holmes, and they are as true to-day as when first penned, nearly eighty years ago. "Everybody," says Feuchtersleben, "wants to be a physician, and everybody thinks himself entitled to ridicule the doctors. Old women (and young ones, too) dabble in our art, and pass judgment on us. . . . Their ranks are reinforced by the hypochondriacs, who feed on the poison which they suck out of medical books, and which they get rid of only to wish that it might kill the doctors." What was so well said in the New York *Evening Post* apropos of a celebration in honor of Oliver Wendell Holmes may be applied, *mutatis mu-*

*tandis*, to Feuchtersleben: "In these days of Christian Science, psycho-therapy and ghostcraft, nothing would be more attractive, and few things would be more enlightening, than such comment as he would have made on these developments."

M. Adrien Delondre, in his sympathetic study of Feuchtersleben, has pointed out a certain vagueness in his language, beginning with the very title of his book. It may be granted that his use of the word "soul" may at times be puzzling alike to the scientist and the theologian. Above all, the logician will find a contradiction between Feuchtersleben's effort to establish the sovereignty of the will over the soul, and the doubt implied as to the very existence of a soul in such a passage as this:

"I shall leave it to philosophers who have time to waste to inquire into the distinction between body and soul, or even to try to prove the existence of one and the other. It matters little whether I assign to the soul the power which materialists attribute to a certain portion of the body, whose function it is to think and to will. By whatever name we may designate the cause,

the effect does not change, nor does the lesson which I draw from it."

Feuchtersleben's unique distinction is that all his vast scientific equipment and all his literary pursuits served only one purpose—the welfare of his fellow men. He was, as Professor Richard M. Meyer says, above all "an educator of the people," and amidst all his interests the interests of humanity were ever the highest. Lessing's *Nathan der Weise* was to him the embodiment of wisdom in literature. "Nothing purer than this book," he wrote, "ever came from man's soul and hand." Purely metaphysical speculation, aside from ethical purposes, was not to his liking, and therefore the Fichtes, Hegels and Schellings had little attraction for him, although he knew them as well as his Goethe, Herder and Kant. In all philosophic systems he looked, above all, for the man behind the writer and for the genuineness of his interest in his fellow men. His æsthetic ideals he found in Plato; his own unbiased spirit of observation made him an admirer of the method of Bacon. What he thought as a philosopher, he practised as a physician. He demanded for his profession the

highest ethical and scientific standards. "Shall we believe," he wrote in a paper on *Aerzte und Publicum* (Physicians and the Public), "that medicine is nothing but a collection of names for diseases and remedies which can be learned by heart and made available, at will, by purely mechanical practice? Nothing can be further from the truth. Medicine is a science which, to use the striking expression of a high authority, 'keeps all the faculties of the physician busy, because it busies itself with all the faculties of man.' Nay, it is more than a science, it is an art. For art is simply knowledge turned into action, and action always calls for all there is in us—our intellectual powers as well as our physical. No man of weak character can succeed in any art. Every profession and occupation has its peculiar requirements that have to be understood; it is so with the priest, the government official, the soldier, and the scholar. How, then, can the half-educated physician understand the conditions surrounding a Goethe, Kant, and a Rahel?\* Woe to the physical wel-

\* Rahel Levin (1771-1833), one of the most brilliant women of her day, who married in 1814 the writer Varnhagen von Ense. She was a centre of attraction in the literary circles of Berlin.



fare of such highly gifted beings if their family physician be unable to judge of the requirements of their individuality."

Equally emphatic was his voice in those political questions for whose solution he so disinterestedly labored. Though devoted to mankind, he was no flatterer of the people, and when, during the revolutionary agitation of 1848, thoughtless demands for the uprooting of all existing conditions were loudest, he, like his friend Grillpaizer, dared to call for moderation and quiet reflection.

"The great question of the day," he wrote, "presses for solution, yet finds us irresolute. The source of all precious gifts, liberty, is disclosed to our eyes. Our parched lips thirst for its blessings, yet, like Tantalus of old, again and again we see it disappear. We all know what obstructions are in the path of the progressive development of constitutional life in all those European states that are now shaken by tremendous convulsions. . . . Are questions which have taxed the greatest thinkers and legislators of all times and all nations—a Moses, Solon, Plato, Aristotle, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Leib-

nitz, Spinoza and Kant—to be decided by the most ignorant?”

Feuchtersleben cannot, any more than Plato, be considered to have been a friend of democracy, but, as Jowett has said, the term has hardly any meaning when applied to a philosopher whose writings are not meant for a particular age and country, but for all times and all mankind. The word “democracy” meant as little to Feuchtersleben as the catch-words “nation” and “race.” With Herder, his fatherland was humanity, but if he saw no magic virtue in the ignorant will of the common man, neither, on the other hand, did he share the conservative dread of “republicanism.” “From our earliest youth,” he wrote, “we have always heard of republican virtues, never of republican vices. The justice of an Aristides, the severity of a Cato, the self-denial of a Brutus, the heroic obedience of a Regulus, the nobility of a Sidney, Washington, Bolivar, the humanity of a Franklin—are these the horrible spectres against which we are now warned with such extreme anxiety? Are not a love of the commonwealth and unshakable fidelity to the law, as it exists, the characteristics

of republican virtue? The error lies solely in confounding the words 'republic' and 'democracy.' "

If Feuchtersleben wasted no time in trying to build up a system of metaphysics—"the art of going astray methodically"—he drew constant inspiration from the great thinkers of antiquity. Yet, a wide gulf separates him, in one important aspect, from the two ancients whose views of life most resembled his own—Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. The image of death, as a factor to be daily reckoned with in man's thoughts, had no place in Feuchtersleben's philosophy, not even as a means of arousing man to a higher morality. Epictetus's indifference to the inquiries of the physical philosophers, moreover, is in marked contrast to Feuchtersleben's insatiable thirst for scientific data, as the safe basis of metaphysical speculation. Marcus Aurelius's lofty character, rather than the cast of his philosophy, must be considered as one of the permanent influences on Feuchtersleben's mind. The two were akin in that their philosophy did not spend itself in systematic search for abstract truth, but proceeded from pronounced ethical

convictions and an active, though unformed, religious feeling. Feuchtersleben had all of Marcus Aurelius's virtue of moderation, his sense of the futility of ambition, his ideals of peaceful happiness within the home; but he never counselled renunciation of the pleasures of life. Least of all had he the gloomy resignation of a Pascal. "All our pleasures are but vanity; there is no good in this life save in the hope of another"—this doctrine had no part in Feuchtersleben's creed. His theory and practice were in accord with Montaigne's saying that "of all the benefits of virtue the contempt of death is the chiefest, a means that furnishes our life with an easeful tranquility, and gives us a pure and amiable taste of it." As a teacher of practical morality, Feuchtersleben, in some respects, resembled Locke. He had in common with Locke the deep interest in popular education, the simplicity of method and sincerity of expression, the blending of idealism and realism in the variety of intellectual pursuits. The direct effect of all of Feuchtersleben's writings is one of elevating stimulation, an increased sense of the beautiful and enjoyable in life—the very opposite of what

Matthew Arnold describes as the result of reading Epictetus or Marcus Aurelius: "a sense of constraint and melancholy."

Perhaps Feuchtersleben's spirit was most closely akin to that of Vauvenargues, "one of the most tender, lofty, cheerful, and delicately sober of all moralists," as Morley calls him, and as Feuchtersleben equally was. He possessed all of Vauvenargues's humaneness, his wide tolerance and gentle persuasiveness, and was like him in that poetic phrasing which heightens the effectiveness of a thought while apparently veiling it. Do we not seem to hear the voice of Feuchtersleben in the saying of Vauvenargues: "Every condition has its shadows and its lights; every nation has its morals and its genius, according to its fortune; the Greeks, whom we surpass in fastidiousness, surpassed us in simplicity"?

The permanent influence of Feuchtersleben's *Diätetik* may be traced in the uninterrupted flow of popular works on psychological subjects, both in this country and abroad, whose keynote is the cultivation of will power. If we eliminate from this mass of books those whose main or

subsidiary motive is a commercial one, or which are intended to pander to the crazes of the day, there still remains a respectable substratum of literature whose legitimate object is the cultivation of serenity of mind.

One cannot close a summary of the life of Feuchtersleben without reverting to the companion who was the source of his greatest happiness. Feuchtersleben's essays contain several allusions to his beloved Helene and, in one place, a faithful portrayal of her principal characteristics. She is described as having been "endowed by Providence with a healthy, frank and cheerful nature, which won her every true heart, as well as with the blessed gift of looking at the world clearly and serenely, without ever making selfish demands or assuming superior airs." An uneducated young girl of the lower Vienna *bourgeoisie* when she first became acquainted with him, she learned to enter into his every thought and aspiration, and her natural intelligence ripened under his influence and direct teaching into a discriminating knowledge of life and literature. She shared to the full his admiration for the great writers of antiquity, and

read after his death in her cloister-like retirement, besides his own works, solely the Greek dramatists. She survived her husband nearly thirty-three years, until May 21, 1882.







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